Rahman KOs Lewis in big boxing upset

STORY IN SPORTS, PAGE A24

Cremated remains of Dacer buried

GOVERNMENT prosecutors will start a preliminary investigation of the disappearance and murder of publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Manuel Corbito, this afternoon, a day after their cremated remains were buried at the Himlayang Pilipino in Quezon City.

Dacer's remains were placed in a white box and brought to the cemetery by an entourage of

CREMATED/ A20

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BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

MONDAY, APRIL 23, 2001 ★ 92 PAGES 8 SECTIONS VOL.16 NO. 134 ₱15

De Villa suffering from heart ailment

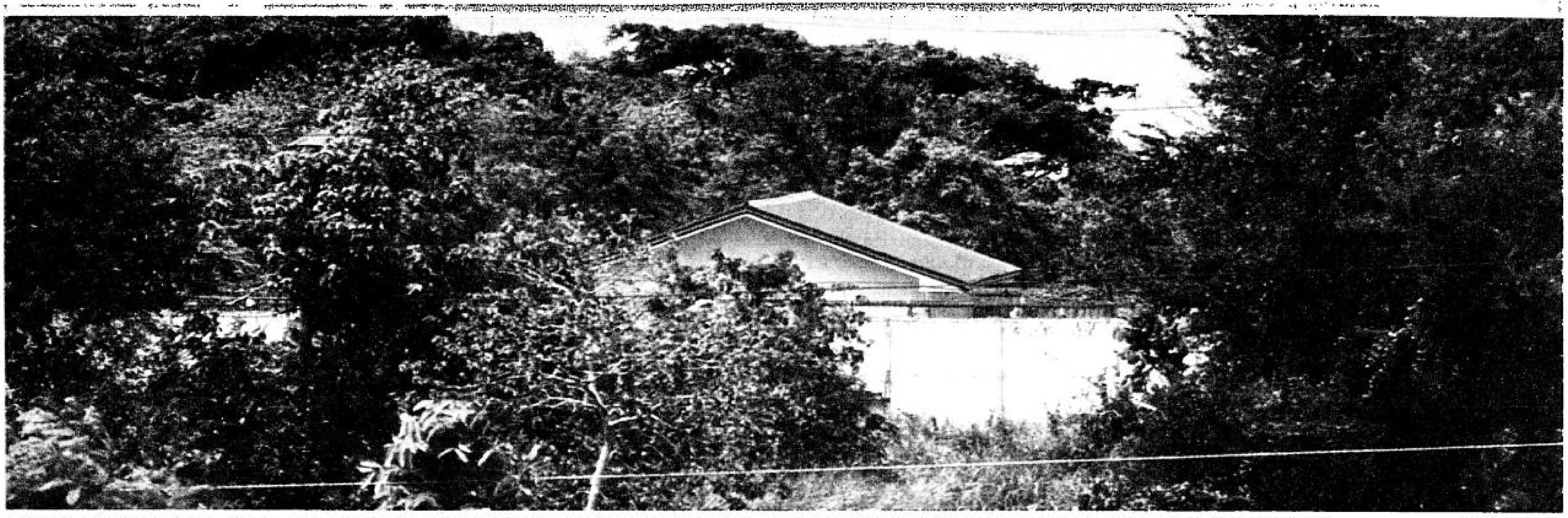
By Armand Nocum

EXECUTIVE Secretary Renato de Villa has been found to have a serious heart ailment and may have to undergo a bypass operation tomorrow.

President Macapagal-Arroyo revealed this yesterday to Palace reporters during a casual talk on the rigors of a tight schedule.

"The hectic schedule has already hit the guys

DE VILLA/ A20



A NEWLY refurbished prison facility awaits deposed President Joseph Estrada inside the five-hectare compound of the PNP Special Action Forces Training and Seminar Center in Silang, Cavite. DENNIS SABANGAN

3 prison sites for Erap

Lawyers' group protests 'special treatment,' threatens suit

By Armand N. Nocum and Carlito Pablo

THE GOVERNMENT is choosing from among three "alternative" prison facilities for detaining Joseph Estrada amid hectic preparations for the expected arrest of the deposed president.

Interior Secretary Jose Lina Jr. revealed this yesterday, saying that the Philippine National Police was deeply immersed in the preparations to secure Estrada in the event that he is detained while being tried for plunder before the Sandiganbayan.

Lina made the disclosure as a lawyers' group threatened to sue officials should the Macapagal administration give special treatment to Estrada following his arrest.

Last night, after attending Sunday Mass, the ousted president refused to answer an INQUIRER reporter's questions about his pending arrest.

"Why will I react when they're going to arrest me already?" aides quoted him as saying.

The Sandiganbayan's third division, headed by Justice Anacleto Badoy Jr., is expected to issue the arrest warrant any day now.

In a phone interview, Lina confirmed that the five-hectare compound of the PNP's Special Action Forces Training and Seminar Center in Silang, Cavite, is one of the detention sites being readied for Estrada.

The others are the Camp Crame detention area and the Camp Bagong Diwa prison facilities in Bicutan.

The government has not made a final choice on which site to use once the Sandiganbayan issues the warrant for Estrada's arrest, Lina said.

But "if the Sandiganbayan issues the (arrest and detention) order, the government does not want to be caught flat-footed," he said.

"We don't want to be placed in (a state of) panic looking for a detention place."

But whichever detention center is chosen, "the security of the former President will be the primary consideration," he said.

3 PRISON/ A6

BADOY: Dispenser of justice in plunder case. EDWIN BACASMAS

Badoy: A reputation for justness, decency

By Martin P. Marfil

TIME'S passage may have impaired his hearing, but it has only strengthened his reputation for integrity, justness and decency.

Such is the portrait painted by friends of the man tasked to preside over the trial for plunder of deposed President Joseph Estrada—a case that could result in a death sentence for the former leader.

That man, Sandiganbayan Justice Anacleto Badoy Jr., 68, has served the government and the Filipino people for more than 20 years, starting his public life when he was elected delegate to the 1971 Constitutional Convention.

Following that stint, he became an assemblyman of the defunct Batasang Pambansa, a member of the Commission on Elections and a Senate secretary before being appointed a justice of the anti-graft court in 1997.

At the Sandiganbayan, employees who deal with Badoy describe him as "strict" in matters of the court but "approachable" when it comes to problems of employees.

"He has told his staff that justices should not talk to parties from both sides. If you go to his room, you will see a notice posted there

BADOY/ A6

What's wrong, right about party-list system

By Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

MOST Filipino voters knew little about the party-list system when they first encountered it in the 1998 elections.

Worse, they had never heard of the system, which seeks to allow sectoral groups to gain seats in the House of Representatives.

They did not even know what to do with the space reserved for it on their ballots.

Now, at least people are making a fuss about it. Ideological groups that for so long had shunned the elections are joining. So are doctors and real estate groups.

So which among the 162 groups/parties—not individuals, mind you—are you voting for? Are you among the befuddled?

Despite the confusion and lack of information about the party-list groups, a handful won representation in Congress in 1998.

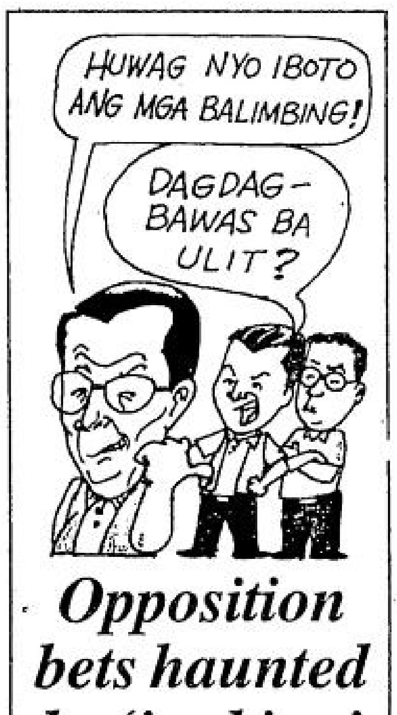
A number have since made significant contributions to lawmaking.

This time around, for the May 2001 elections, the party-list campaign is getting exciting. Although there's much to be desired information-wise, more sectors (and pseudo-sectors) and parties are joining.

Alas, politicians who can't make it through the front door are using the party-list system as the back door.

The Party-List System Act (Republic Act 7941), which was passed in 1995, was a consolidated version of House Bill 3043 and Senate Bill 1913. It gave hope that the politically marginalized sectors would have a voice in Congress. Fifty-two seats, or 20 percent of the seats in the House of Representatives,

WHAT'S/ A20



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DAGDAG-BAWAS BA ULIT?

Opposition bets haunted by 'junking'

By Dona Pazzibugan

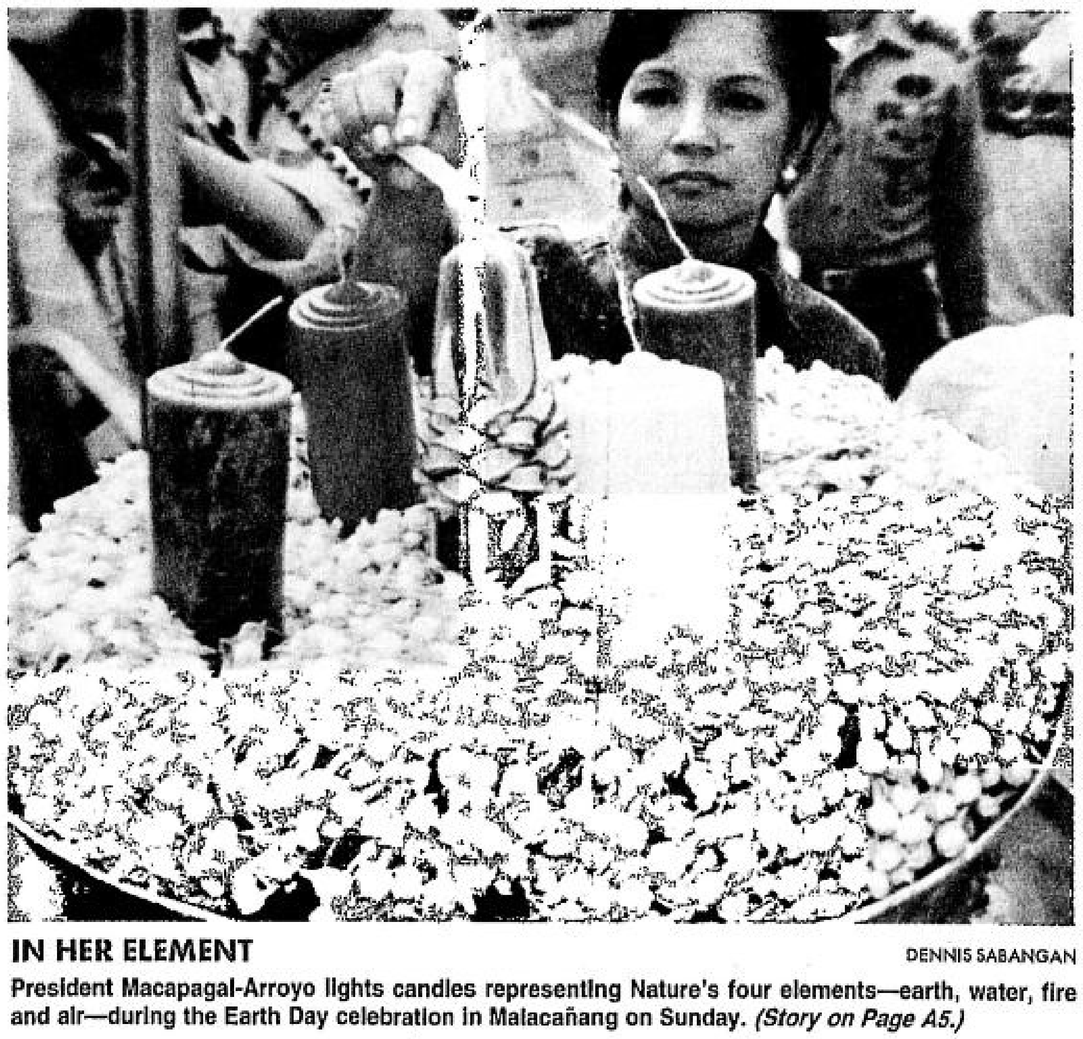
"DAGDAG-BAWAS" is plaguing the opposition senatorial slate this early.

The alleged proponent of "*dagdag-bawas* (vote padding and shaving)" in the 1995 senatorial elections, reelectionist Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, has "junked" fellow opposition senatorial candidates Noli de Castro and Orlando Mercado.

For the first time, Enrile refused to endorse De Castro and Mercado and referred to them as "*balimbings* (turncoats)" during a rally in Olongapo City on Friday night.

The two former broad-

OPPOSITION/ A6



IN HER ELEMENT DENNIS SABANGAN

President Macapagal-Arroyo lights candles representing Nature's four elements—earth, water, fire and air—during the Earth Day celebration in Malacañang on Sunday. *(Story on Page A5.)*

GMA, Tiglao set paradigm shift in informing people

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE APPOINTMENT of Rigoberto Tiglao as spokesperson for President Macapagal-Arroyo foreshadows a sea change in explaining the presidency.

That Tiglao is an experienced journalist with economic expertise is less important than the fact that the President and Tiglao represent a paradigm shift in informing the people about the policies, programs and priorities of the administration.

To be concise, the shift is about rejecting the notion that the main function of the presidential spokesperson is to be a spin doctor or, to put it less elegantly, to do a cover-up for mistakes and questionable deals.

Ms Macapagal's instructions to Tiglao are clear and simple. She wants "less glitz,

GMA/ A20

Ex-PCGG chief's family decries 'arrest' story

"IT'S part of a smear campaign against my father."

Lawyer Solomon Castro yesterday gave this reaction to what he called the "false report" about the arrest of his father, David Castro, former chair of the Presidential Commission on Good Government (PCGG), in New York on Wednesday.

The South China Morning Post, a Hong Kong newspaper, reported on Saturday that the elder Castro had been arrested in an entrapment operation by agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

He and a partner, identified as Edilberto Marcos, had reportedly tried to sell a fake $20-million share of an $800-million gold certificate to an undercover FBI agent.

Marcos, who claimed to be a son of the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, had

EX-PCGG/ A6

WALA NG
URUNGAN,
TULOY NA TULOY
NA NGAYONG
BIYERNES!

Second FRONT PAGE

NDF sees release of Rowe killers

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

REBEL chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni said he expects the release soon of 40 political prisoners, including the convicted killers of an American military adviser, with the resumption of peace talks with the communist-led National Democratic Front this Friday.

The prisoners could be released either before or after the start of the talks in Oslo, Norway, on April 27.

The resumption of the talks would not be affected, however, by the schedule of the prisoners' release, Jalandoni said.

"(It's) all systems go for the peace negotiations," said Jalandoni, adding that both government and NDF sides are determined for the talks to resume on Friday.

Even if it would not be possible to release the prisoners before April 27, Jalandoni said the government should continue to accelerate the process.

The next batch of political prisoners due for release include New People's Army leader Leoncio Pitao; Church worker Lorna Rivera Baba; Juanito Itaas and Danilo Continente, convicted assassins of US Col. James Rowe; and 36 others, Jalandoni said.

Pitao is facing multiple criminal charges before regional trial courts in Davao. He led an NPA unit that kidnapped Army Brig. Gen. Victor Obillo and Capt. Eduardo Montealto and held them captive from Feb. 17 to April 16 last year.

Baba was accused of masterminding the killing of former rebel-priest Conrado Balweg.

Itaas and Continente were convicted in the assassination in 1989 of Rowe, an ex-deputy commander of the Joint US Military Assistance Group (Jusmag).

Members of the peace panels are scheduled to arrive in Oslo on Thursday.

On the first day of the talks, the NDF and government panels will exchange updated drafts of the comprehensive agreement on social and economic reforms, Jalandoni said.

From April 28 to 30, the delegates will be discussing these reforms, including "confidence-building measures to improve the atmosphere for the peace negotiations," he said.

Both panels will then move on to the issues of economic sovereignty, national patrimony, agricultural reforms, industrialization, and the rights of working people, he said.

The last item, Jalandoni said, will tackle the proposed P125 across-the-board wage increase, the P3,000 increase in the monthly salary of government workers, the abolition of the contractual system of employment, and social services.

Ailing Zumel, wife to remain in Manila

BY C. PABLO

ANTONIO Zumel will not be joining his National Democratic Front comrades for new peace talks with the government in Oslo, Norway, on April 27.

The ailing Zumel, who suffered a mild stroke soon after his arrival from his Netherlands exile on April 8, will remain in Manila to recuperate.

His wife, Ruth de Leon, a senior adviser and chief of the NDF secretariat, will be staying with him.

"He will take a rest to regain his physical strength," said NDF chief negotiator Luis Jalandoni. "He's supposed to be discharged from the hospital and recuperate at home."

The Zumels are covered by immunity and security guarantees.

Jalan-doni and his wife, Consuelo Ledesma, are scheduled to leave Manila tonight for the Netherlands from where they and the rest of the NDF panel will proceed to Norway on April 26.

The Zumels and Jalandonis returned to Manila in early April for consultations with their allies and for meetings with their government counterparts in preparation for the talks.

Zumel, 68, a former newsman, has been confined at the St. Luke's Hospital since he was stricken.

A revered figure in the communist underground, Zumel sent an emotional message to the solidarity conference with the government side last April 18, saying his only wish was to see peace come during his twilight years.

Jalandoni said Jose Ma. Sison, founding chair of the communist party and chief political consultant of the NDF, would be taking over Zumel's duties.

Jalandoni said he and his wife are leaving Manila with high hopes after the "very congenial" meeting they had with President Macapagal-Arroyo last Friday night.

"It was a warm exchange of best wishes for the success of the talks," he said.

"We agreed that we have to address the root causes of the armed conflict so that just and lasting peace may come to our land," he said. "Otherwise what we'll have is just the peace of the cemetery."

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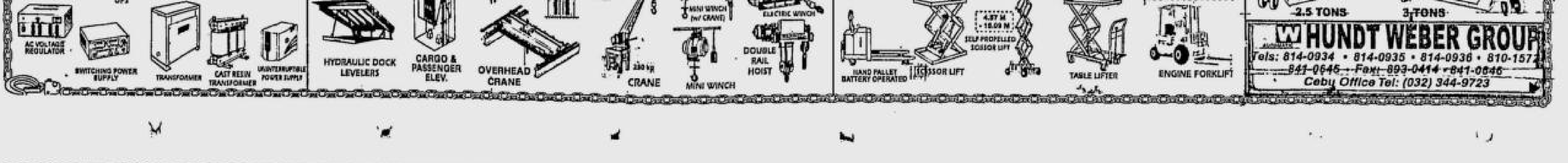

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Tiglao tack: The economy, not 'Armani'

By Armand N. Nocum

THE MALACAÑANG press pack is in for a "paradigm shift" in their reportorial orientation.

The new presidential spokesperson, a trained economist like his boss, may well turn this prime political beat into an economics and business reporting seminar.

Journalist Rigoberto Tiglao, who cut his journalistic teeth as an economics and business reporter in the defunct Business Day newspaper, predicts that with the expected political stability after the May 14 elections, the focus of national news will shift to economics.

Tiglao, who is to formally start his spokesman's duties today, said he will be introducing more business stories in the Palace reporters' daily lineup.

But he assures that he will be helping the "political" reporters to brush up on their knowledge of economics.

That is not the only new departure from the usual practice for Palace mouthpieces.

For one, there will be no make-up sessions or Armani suits for the Tiglao who said he will be reporting for work with "rolled-up sleeves," which is how he describes the working style of the Macapagal-Arroyo Cabinet.

"Efficiency, less *palabas*," he said, repeating the President's advice to him to have more "substance" and less "glitz."

He said the President may have been mindful of the Estrada spokespersons'—Ricardo "Dong" Puno and Michael Toledo—penchant for designer suits.

Tiglao remembers Puno and Toledo, former television personalities, as being "glib-tongued." This translated into good sound bites on the 6 o'clock television news.

Puno is even remembered by the Malacañang press corps as having retained his own make-up person to prepare him for his television appearances.

By contrast, print journalist Tiglao is not sure, or probably doesn't even care, whether he looks good on television.

He said he is in Malacañang to do serious work in Ms Macapagal's "no-nonsense government."

Instead of the President's political aides briefing the press on political, peace and order and security issues, he said he would be inviting economic experts to the regular press briefings.

He singled out Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas and National Economic and Development Authority chief Dante Canlas.

He said such a change is part of the government's efforts to get the country to move forward.

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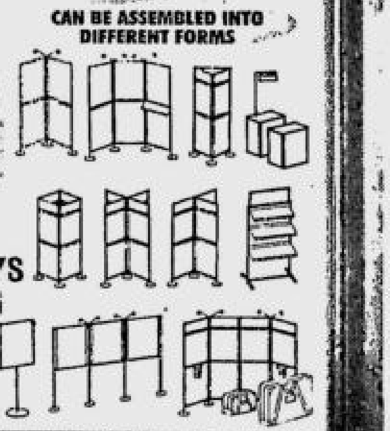

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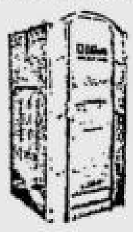

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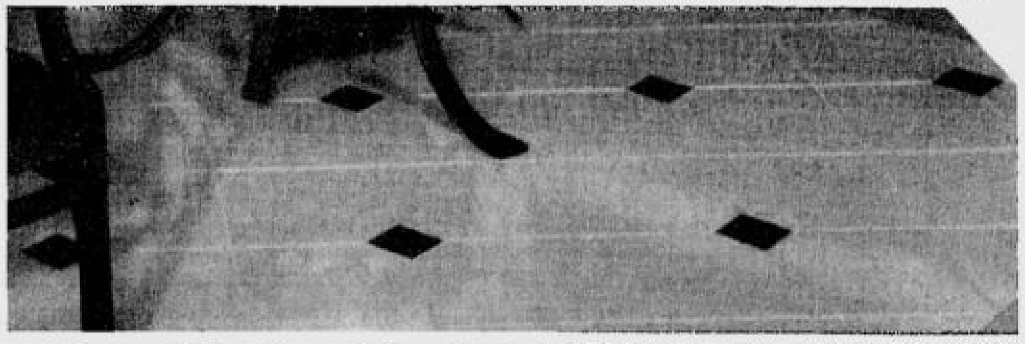

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Abus still a threat to tourists

THE NOTORIOUS Abu Sayyaf rebels in the South remain a threat to tourism in the region one year after their abduction of mostly foreigners holidaying in neighboring Malaysia, officials say.

Following a massive military assault, all the foreigners from the 21 hostages taken from the Sipadan island resort exactly a year ago on Monday have been freed.

But the Abu Sayyaf rebels continue to lurk for prey from their base in the remote island of Jolo facing the extensive Sulu and Celebes Seas.

As the Philippine marks the anniversary of the Sipadan abductions with a pledge to "annihilate" the Abu Sayyaf, the bandits remain well entrenched on Jolo island and even continue to taunt Manila with their open defiance.

Officials familiar with the protracted negotiations that led to the release of most of the hostages last year said the Abu Sayyaf would remain a threat unless impoverished Jolo was developed to rid itself of a generations-old "gun culture."

"The Abu Sayyaf is just a name. You take them out, another group of successors will rise because there are many guns and bandits in Jolo," said Ernesto Pacuno, alias Commander Dragon, who nearly lost his life in an ambush while negotiating for the release of the hostages.

"Besides, I don't think the army would be able to destroy them," said Pacuno, a retired police colonel who once served in Jolo.

"The problem is an endless cycle because they enjoy mastery of the terrain and the villagers protect them," he said.

Pacuno advised the government to speed up the implementation of livelihood projects in Jolo, only minutes by speed boat from Malaysia's Sabah state, a popular tourist destination.

The Abu Sayyaf took the hostages from Sipadan off Sabah last year and brought them to Jolo, from where they again took more foreigners, including journalists covering the kidnapping saga, and locals as captives.

It is believed huge ransoms were paid for their release. Only one hostage, Filipino scuba diving instructor, Rolland Ullah, remains in Abu Sayyaf custody.

None of the Abu Sayyaf leaders have been caught even though the government launched a military drive to get them at all costs. In fact, some warn, the group could emerge stronger if unemployed youths join them to eke out a living. *AFP*

2 cops in Schilling rescue honored today

THE GOVERNMENT will honor today two police officers principally responsible for the rescue of American hostage Jeffrey Schilling from the lairs of the Abu Sayyaf in Sulu.

SPO3 Hajim Abdani Timbang and SPO3 Asiri Inog Buclao, both of the Luuk Police Station, Sulu Police Provincial Offices, will be cited for their significant roles in the daring rescue during the flag-raising ceremonies today at the Philippine National Police headquarters in Camp Crame, Quezon City.

President Macapagal-Arroyo herself ordered the holding of a ceremony to give due recognition to the two policemen, a Malacañang statement said.

According to Chief Supt. Efren Fernandez, PNP Director for Personnel and Records Management, the two will also be accorded meritorious promotion during the ceremonies.

Reports said a student named Nidsman Timbang stumbled on Schilling's hiding place while on his way home in the coastal town of Luuk.

The student rushed home to tell his father, SPO3 Hajim Timbang, who immediately set out to the hiding place on his motorcycle after alerting soldiers.

Malaysian vessels held for poaching

TWO Malaysian-registered fishing vessels with mostly Indonesian crewmembers have been intercepted poaching off the southern Philippine island of Tawi-Tawi, officials said yesterday.

The skippers of the Malaysian vessels, Harianto bin Majih and Usman bin Sideke, denied that they were poaching and claimed they were only seeking shelter in the area after encountering engine trouble last week, police said.

Both men, along with their eight Indonesian crew, were taken to Tawi-Tawi's police headquarters where formal charges are being prepared against them. *AFP*

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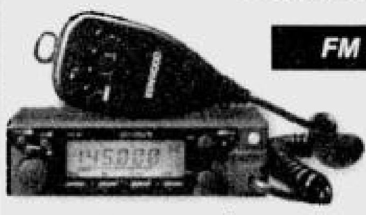

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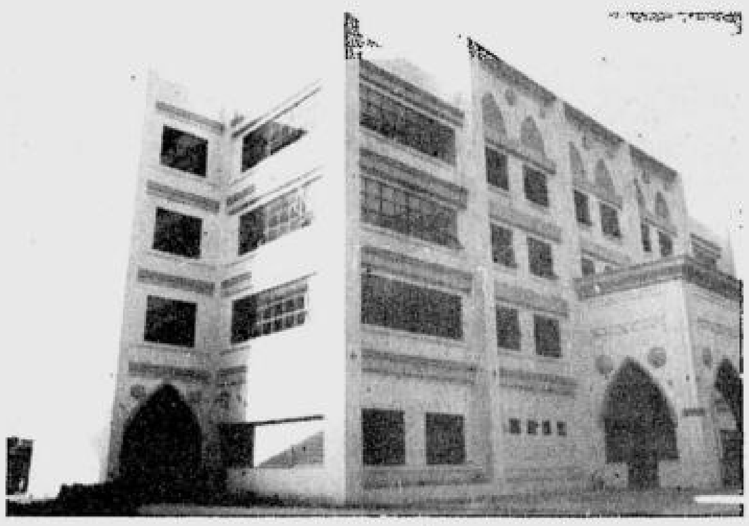

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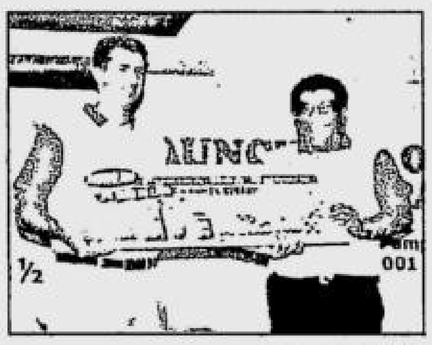

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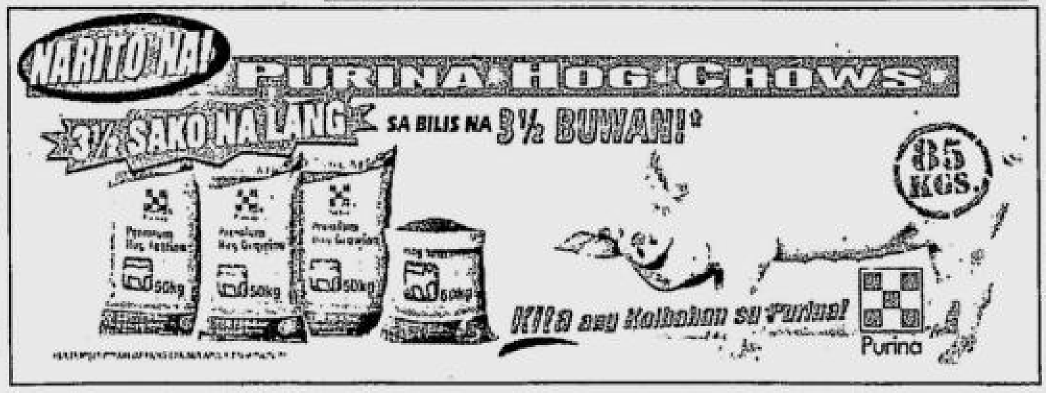
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Gloria leads Earth Day rites

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday led officials in activities marking Earth Day, including tree planting and the unveiling of a vehicle powered by natural gas, the Palace said.

The ceremonies were held at the sprawling garden of the Malacañang Palace, where Ms Macapagal and her husband joined the public in a special Mass to protect the environment.

Ms Macapagal joined Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez in unveiling an experimental van whose engine has been converted to use compressed natural gas as an alternative fuel with cleaner emissions.

The two also lauded local officials for pursuing recycling and composting in a bid to reduce Manila's garbage problem.

Exhibits and workshops on clean technologies were also held, with Ms Macapagal and Alvarez capping the event with a tree-planting ceremony, the Palace said.

"The event at the Palace with President Macapagal-Arroyo, Secretary Alvarez and other ministers shows a real commitment on the part of the Philippines for a sustainable future," a statement quoted Earth Day International spokeswoman Evelyn Guerra as saying. *AFP*

Alvarez hits US decision to junk Kyoto Protocol

ENVIRONMENT Secretary Heherson Alvarez yesterday decried the decision of the United States to back out from the 1997 Kyoto Protocol where the US would cut carbon dioxide emissions and help curb global warming.

During the Earth Day celebration in Malacañang, Alvarez said that the US withdrawal has serious implications for island nations such as the Philippines.

Scientists have predicted that if the rise in world temperature is not stopped, the resulting meltdown of the glaciers in the polar zones will cause flooding in low-lying island nations and displace tens of millions of people.

He said global warming is a real threat to the safety and security of archipelagic nations such as the Philippines. From this viewpoint, the US withdrawal from the Kyoto Protocol may be viewed as an unfriendly act.

The US with 4 percent of the world's population produces about 25 percent of the greenhouse gases, specifically carbon dioxide, that is directly causing global warming.

The US is also considered as the biggest polluter on the planet with total carbon dioxide emissions of about 186.1 billion tons since 1950.

US President George Bush announced the US decision not to honor its commitment to cut by 7 percent its carbon dioxide emissions below the 1990 levels. *PNA*

Environmentalists say Villar is 'green'

SEVERAL environmental activists have come to the defense of former speaker Manny Villar, who only rated 65 percent in a survey on Senate candidates' awareness of and advocacy for the environment.

The survey, conducted by the Earth Day Network, was published in Sunday's INQUIRER. It gave Villar a 65 percent or "red" rating and ranked him eighth in environmental issues among the senatorial bets in the May 14 elections.

"If there is someone who deserves accolades for fighting the cause of the environment it would be Villar," said Narda Camacho, executive vice president of the Metro Manila Linis Ganda movement.

Odette Alcantara, convenor of the Mother Earth Foundation, said Villar was the speaker of the House when several pro-environment bills were passed.

"He fought for the passage of the Clean Air Act despite the large sums of lobby money being passed around to derail its passage," Alcantara said.

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3 prison sites for Erap

(From page A1)

"It will be blood on the hands of this administration," Lina said of the possibility that Estrada might be harmed in a congested jail.

Slashed

A military source said yesterday that the Armed Forces leadership had recently slashed by half Estrada's military security force in reaction to a report last month that the former president had been assigned around 70 soldiers to guard him.

"Thirty-four soldiers were taken out sometime this month (April)," said the source, a ranking military officer.

The source noted that some of the original members of the security force were deployed to secure Estrada's "other families."

In another interview, responding to a question of how Estrada's military security detail would respond in the case of the former leader's arrest, the spokesperson of the Armed Forces said the soldiers would not try to stop it.

"They are not his (Estrada) private guards," AFP spokesperson Brig. Gen. Edilberto Adan said.

"They will not resist any arrest order, otherwise they will also be subject to prosecution," Adan said. "They are professionals."

Adan also said that once the former president is arrested for plunder, the AFP will pull out his military security detail.

To be reassigned

"His military escorts will be returned to their former units and the PNP (Philippine National Police) will be taking charge of his security," Adan said.

"The only reason he (Estrada) is allowed a security detail is that he is still a free man," Adan added.

The INQUIRER reported that after Estrada's ouster, the then AFP chief of staff, Gen. Angelo Reyes, allowed him to maintain a sizable military security detail, making him the most heavily guarded living former president.

Former President Corazon Aquino has only three military escorts while her successor, Fidel Ramos, a former general, has two officers and 11 enlisted personnel guarding him.

A military force consisting of 48 enlisted personnel and three officers was placed under the jurisdiction of Reyes' personal office at Camp Aguinaldo, according to official military documents.

Following the publication of this arrangement, Malacañang noted that Estrada's security detail was in fact bigger, numbering about 70 men.

Little comforts

No matter where Estrada would be jailed, he would be given some degree of respect and comfort—such as an air-conditioned room and a private toilet—befitting a former president, Lina said.

He explained that these "little comforts" would be allowed as long as the primary objective of putting a person in prison was achieved—in other words, depriving him of his liberty.

He also said there would be no need to go hard on Estrada because he would merely be a "detention prisoner, not a convicted prisoner."

"He is being detained pending the outcome of the case," Lina pointed out.

In a radio interview on Friday, Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena said Estrada would not be given "special treatment" although he would be treated like a former president.

"He will not be treated like a hoodlum. He will be treated like a former President but he will still be in jail . . . and he will still have to follow the rules and regulations of the place of detention. He will not have special privileges. *Malinaw. ang usapan diyan* (That's clear)," Garchitorena said.

Lawyers to sue

Some groups did not agree with the government's stance.

"Why should a big-time politician be given big-time privileges for his big-time crimes?" asked lawyer Leonard de Vera, spokesperson for Clear (Caucus of Lawyers for Erap's Abrupt Resignation).

He was reacting to an INQUIRER report that a "jail cell" with amenities like air-conditioning, a receiving area and a private exercise yard had been prepared for Estrada at the Special Action Forces Center, which straddles the border between Laguna and Cavite.

De Vera said his group, together with Dante Jimenez's Volunteers Against Crime and Corruption, would go to court should Estrada receive special privileges while in jail.

"There is no law which grants a President or senator or congressman special jail privileges and denies the same to all other ordinary citizens. Our executive officials should stop inventing their own laws," Clear said in a statement.

Granting Estrada such privileges as an air-conditioned cell would "violate the equal protection clause of Article III, Section I of the Constitution's Bill of Rights," De Vera said.

Prisoner attack?

The Quezon City jail is legally the site where Estrada should be detained due to its proximity to the Sandiganbayan.

But Lina voiced concern that jailing Estrada there would only expose him to attacks from prisoners "out to make history" at the expense of the disgraced president.

"It will be this government that will get the blame. We will be accused of letting loose an anti-Erap element (to harm Estrada)," he said.

"We cannot allow one inmate out to make history frustrate the course of justice," he added.

Besides, he said, the Quezon City jail is known to be a hotbed of riots and "gang wars."

Not fair?

In Davao City, the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) scoffed at government plans to put Estrada in an air-conditioned cell.

Alvin Luque, Bayan-Davao City secretary general and a candidate for councilor, said the group respected Estrada's basic human right to have a decent prison cell, but putting an air-conditioner in his cell was not fair in a country where such an appliance was a luxury.

"Most Filipinos do not even have a home, much less an air-conditioned one. Why give one to a felon?" Luque asked.

"We urge the Macapagal administration not to grant Estrada any special treatment. In the first place, Estrada should not be accorded the respect and dignity due a former president because the crimes he committed are unpardonable," Luque said.

Robinson Montalba, secretary general of the Promotion of Church People's Response (PCPR)-Southern Mindanao, said any special treatment for Estrada would be a "mockery of justice."

"Most people were driven to crime due to poverty but Estrada's case is different because he plundered our poor nation to support his family and mistresses' lavish lifestyle," Montalba said.

Implementation

Reporters, who have been awaiting the issuance of the arrest order since last week, have been hounding court personnel for any information on the matter.

Estrada's arrest will be handled by law enforcement units since the Sandiganbayan merely issues orders but does not implement them, Garchitorena said in an interview Friday.

"We will release our order of arrest and the law enforcement agencies will take proper steps to implement these orders," he said.

"We can only issue orders but we have no idea how to implement them," Garchitorena added.

He also welcomed any move of Estrada to surrender to the anti-graft court.

"The statement of the (former) President that he'll be happy to surrender and comply with the law is welcome news," Garchitorena said.

"And if (Estrada) voluntarily comes to the Sandiganbayan so that he can properly (be) taken to the place of custody, then to that extent we will minimize any undue confrontation," he said.

The Ombudsman initially filed 11 graft cases, eight of them naming Estrada and several others as accused. However, the Ombudsman is now trying to withdraw five of the eight cases that were raffled off to the five divisions of the anti-graft court. ***With reports from Jowel F. Canuday, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Martin Marfil and Cathy Yamsuan***

Badoy: A reputation for justness, decency

(From page A1)

reminding everyone of that rule," an employee told the INQUIRER.

Mandaluyong Rep. Neptali "Boyet" Gonzales II, whose father has known Badoy for decades, emphasized the justice's reputation for incorruptibility.

"I don't expect him to allow himself to be pressured by either the pro-Estrada or anti-Estrada camps," Gonzales said.

Asked for his opinion on Badoy as dispenser of justice in the Estrada case, Gonzales said he would weigh the case "based on jurisprudence and evidence."

Only problem

"He's kind. The only problem is that he's somewhat deaf, and you have to speak right next to his ear to be heard," a former Senate staff member who worked with Badoy when the latter was Senate secretary said fondly in another interview.

Once, the former Senate official said, some of his colleagues wanted to "fast-track" the acquisition of certain materials for their offices, but it was Badoy who stopped them.

"He said no. He wanted everything done legally. Based on our dealings with him, I respect that man," said the official, who asked not to be named.

Tops

Born in Marawi City, Badoy was a consistent valedictorian from elementary school to law school. He has practiced law since his graduation from the San Beda College law school in 1959.

He also taught law, political science and philosophy at various times from 1956 to 1970 in five universities and colleges.

According to Representative Gonzales II, the Sandiganbayan justice has been a friend of the senior Neptali Gonzales ever since Badoy joined the firm Antonio, Roxas, Chua and Associates or Arca.

Manila Bulletin president and former Senate President Gonzales worked at the time at the legal department of another firm housed in the same building, according to the congressman.

"They were friends and it was my father who took him in as Senate secretary (from 1992 to 1993)," the younger Gonzales said.

Badoy "was very unassuming, and his reputation was untarnished. He had integrity. He was soft-spoken and humble. As a law practitioner, he was never an 'operator,'" the Mandaluyong congressman added.

'On the people's side'

Human rights lawyer Romeo Capulong, who worked with Badoy in the 1971 Constitutional Convention, echoed the appraisal.

"He's a decent person as far as I know. He voted on the side of the people. He never allowed himself to be utilized by (the late dictator Ferdinand) Marcos," Capulong said.

Capulong recalled that Badoy had voted for a proposal to ban the extension of Marcos' term. The dictator, even at the early date, had already stayed in office longer than the two four-year terms prescribed under the 1935 Constitution.

"I remember (Badoy) voting for the 'Ban-Marcos' resolution and he was not tarnished by the payola scandal," Capulong said. He was referring to a major scandal that erupted when Constitutional Convention Delegate Eduardo Quintero revealed that many of his colleagues were receiving regular bribes from the Marcoses.

Generous

When it comes to problems of his staff or of other personnel, the Sandiganbayan employee said Badoy was very "approachable" and "generous."

He recalled how a member of the court's security detail approached Badoy with a "family problem" and the justice immediately handed over P2,500 to the man.

The security officer "did not even have to ask twice (*Isang lapit lang, hindi nagdalawang salita*)," the employee said.

In another instance, he said, Badoy gave another court employee a "loan" of P500, but when he tried to repay it, he was told to keep the money.

"That stopped the employee from asking for another loan," he added.

Just but not 'fast'

A priest, who came to know Badoy well during the 1986 snap elections when they both worked for the National Citizens' Movement for Free Elections or Namfrel, said Badoy "will be a just judge."

"He will be fair," Fr. Eliseo Mercado Jr., president of the Notre Dame University in Cotabato City, said in a telephone interview.

"But he will not be a 'fast' judge—meaning, he will weigh the issues very well. He will stick to what the law states," Mercado said.

Mercado was Namfrel coordinator in Maguindanao, while Badoy was head of the Namfrel legal panel in North Cotabato in the presidential election leading up to Marcos' ouster.

Badoy's younger brother, Ludovico, served as Cotabato City mayor from 1988 to 1998, while another brother, Solomon, served as chair of the Southern Philippines Development Administration.

To retire in 2002

Badoy, born on Oct. 19, 1932, is supposed to retire in 2002 at age 70.

Asked what would happen to the Estrada case if Badoy retires, Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena said: "We'll see at what stage the plunder case is. If the case is closed by that time, then it will make no difference."

Garchitorena said a proposal to hold daily hearings in Estrada's trial would depend on the Sandiganbayan judges.

"The wisdom of holding daily trials, morning and afternoon trials, will be left very much to the wisdom, discretion and prudence on the part of the judges of each division," he said on Friday.

He pointed out the workload problems that such a schedule would pose for both the prosecution and the defense, and added that daily hearings might also tax court stenographers. ***With a report from Carolyn O. Arguillas***

Opposition bets haunted by 'junking'

(From page A1)

casters are officially running as independents, but they have been taken in by the pro-Estrada Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Puwersa ng Masa (LDP-PnM) as "guest candidates."

During the Olongapo rally, Enrile pointedly did not mention De Castro and Mercado even as he endorsed the rest of the slate.

"I will not name the two and I will not mention the reason as the people might get angry," Enrile told the crowd in Filipino.

He paused until someone in the audience shouted "SMB!"

"Do you know what SMB means. It's not San Miguel Beer. It's an Association of Turncoats (Samahan ng mga Balimbing)," Enrile went on, obviously still referring to De Castro and Mercado.

De Castro, who was perceived to be pro-Estrada during the impeachment trial, has refused to be identified with either the Estrada or Macapagal camps since he launched his campaign.

Mercado is considered unpopular in the pro-Estrada camp because he joined the People Power II at the Edsa Shrine at the 11th hour.

Interviewed backstage, Enrile was initially hesitant to give his reasons for junking the two.

When pressed, Enrile said he was junking De Castro "since he is also junking us."

"He's not campaigning for us anyway," he said.

He did not say though why he was junking Mercado.

De Castro once joined an opposition sortie, while Mercado appeared a few times at opposition sorties and completely stopped joining since early last month.

The former ABS-CBN news anchor has admitted to the INQUIRER that he preferred to campaign for and by himself. He appeared unconcerned about threats that he would be dropped from the opposition ticket unless he joined their sorties more often.

Enrile was more forgiving toward other LDP-PnM candidates who, like De Castro and Mercado, were frequently absent from the sorties.

He still endorsed Sen. Gregorio Honasan, his former military aide, and former police chief Panfilo Lacson who have both been going solo in the campaign.

Ironically, Enrile had used the term "SMB" or "Samahan ng mga Balimbings" before in referring to some of the candidates of the administration's People Power Coalition (PPC).

Former first lady Luisa "Loi" Ejercito also frequently used the term in referring to certain PPC candidates whom she believed had turned their backs on her husband.

The possibility of "junking" in the opposition had been revealed earlier, but it was the first time that a candidate openly talked about it.

Last month, Nationalist People's Coalition president Ernesto Maceda said the party would junk five LDP-PnM candidates, namely Mercado, Jamby Madrigal, Santanina Rasul, Ombra Tamano and Reuben Canoy.

He said it would support five reelectionists in the administration ticket.

Mercado stopped joining Estrada in the opposition sorties after LDP president Edgardo Angara publicly castigated him for sowing "demoralization" among members of the ticket.

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Ex-PCGG chief's family decries story

(From page A1)

reportedly said the gold belonged to the Marcos family and was stored in Union Bank of Switzerland vaults.

The Post said Castro was caught in the operation after he had claimed that as a Philippine government representative, he needed to collect the taxes on any transaction involving the Marcos gold.

"He has not been arrested and he has not been charged," Solomon, Castro's only son, told the INQUIRER.

Confined

In a statement, Castro's family said "all this time, he has been confined in a New York hospital for high blood pressure following elevated blood sugar levels resulting from his diabetes, and for physical therapy to recover from a bad fracture sustained in a fall on his way to New Year's Eve Mass."

According to Solomon, "We spoke to him today (Sunday) and he is well and in high spirits. He is recuperating but is in constant touch with us. He is okay."

"He is actively preparing for the legal fight ahead and is very confident that all the accusations will be proven false and the whole truth regarding the matter will be uncovered," he said.

Solomon noted that his father had been "threatened and seriously maligned before." He did not say, however, who was behind the smear campaign against his father or why.

"But his resolve to pursue the truth about the (Marcos) hidden wealth is even stronger now and greater than the assuredness of those who seek to hide the truth or those who wish to recover the wealth only for themselves," Solomon said.

Post story

He added that "everyone will hear from him very soon and he will make a statement when he returns to Manila."

Castro's family in Manila has gotten in touch with the South China Morning Post to confirm if Victoria Button, the writer under whose byline the exclusive story appeared in Hong Kong, had actually been in New York and witnessed the arrest of David Castro or was fed the information by a third party.

"Neither The New York Times nor New York Post covered the FBI operation," they said.

An INQUIRER source close to the Marcos family said Edilberto Marcos was really Edilberto del Carmen, who is wanted by Hong Kong authorities for an alleged international plot to obtain credit using $148 billion in fake US Federal Reserve notes.

Stephen Sayell, chief investigator of the Hong Kong International Commission Against Corruption, said his office was in contact with the US Department of Justice to work out the possible extradition to the former British colony of the man claiming to be Marcos' son.

The same source claimed that while Del Carmen's documents were fake, the $800-million gold certificate held by Castro was authentic.

The certificate was "authentic. (Castro) took that from the PCGG," the source said.

The source, who returned to Manila from the United States on Friday, said he had gone to the United States to furnish the FBI with documents on the attempt by Del Carmen to withdraw the deposits using the authentic certificate in Castro's possession.

US Embassy

The source claimed that he first showed the documents to the US Embassy in Manila. When they were declared authentic, he was allowed to go to the United States to show the documents and reveal what he knew to the FBI. He said he was there for five days.

The Post reported that "in the US court deposition, FBI special agent Ronald Henderson alleged that Edilberto Marcos provided an FBI undercover agent with a fake safekeeping receipt for a $20-million share of the $800-million gold certificate."

The PCGG, which is mandated by law to recover the late dictator's alleged ill-gotten wealth, has denied any ties to the "two arrested Filipinos."

Jorge Sarmiento, PCGG officer in charge, said Castro, who headed the agency during the Aquino administration, was no longer connected with it in any capacity.

Castro was not authorized either to collect taxes in behalf of the Philippine government, Sarmiento said.

According to the Post, Castro was a director of Metro Grant Holdings, a company set up by Edilberto Marcos last year in Hong Kong.

Castro first met Del Carmen in Hong Kong, the INQUIRER source said. He said that when Del Carmen inaugurated his Hong Kong office, Castro was there along with some relatives of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

Metro Grant Holdings was launched last August with a lavish HK$2-million party at the Grand Hyatt Hotel, the Post reported.

Castro was in the news in 1999 when he claimed that he had entered into an agreement with the Estrada administration to recover the ill-gotten assets of the Marcoses, including the alleged $13.2-billion Irene Araneta account in Switzerland, in an operation dubbed "Project Recovery." ***Jerry Esplanada***

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This Application is irrevocable and, once submitted, may not be withdrawn by the applicant. The Department of Finance/ Bureau of the Treasury reserves the right to accept or reject this Application. Application improperly or incompletely accomplished may likewise be rejected. In case of oversubscription, the DOF/BTR reserves the right to allocate the RTBs available to the applicants in a manner it deems appropriate.

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1) a certified true copy of its Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws, or other constitutive document;
2) a certified true copy of its SEC Certificate of Registration; and
3) a notarized certification of the Resolution of the Board of Directors and/or other appropriate committee or body authorizing the purchase of the 4-year RTBs and designating the authorized signatories thereof.

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The 4-year RTBs shall constitute direct, unconditional, and general obligations of the Issuer and shall at all times rank *pari passu* and without any preference or priority among such obligations. The bonds shall be scripless and registered under the BTR's ROSS System.

THE PRIMARY ISSUE. The primary issue consists of an Institutional Offering and a Public Offering. In both the Institutional and Public Offerings, investors may subscribe through the Underwriters by submitting the duly accomplished Application to Purchase. The Underwriter hereby confirms that it will provide liquidity by granting at all times two-way prices for the Bonds to investors that have purchased the Bonds from it.

INSTITUTIONAL OFFERING. The Institutional Offering shall be conducted through a Bookbuilding Process at the end of which (on April 18, 2001) the coupon rate for the 4-year RTBs was set. During the Bookbuilding Process, applications to purchase must be for a minimum Face Value of One Million Pesos (PhP1,000,000.00).

PUBLIC OFFERING. The Public Offering Period shall commence on April 20, 2001 and shall end at 12:00 noon of April 26, 2001. The Issuer reserves the right to extend or terminate the Public Offering period at any time.

ELIGIBLE INVESTORS. Any qualified individual, corporation, partnership, trust, association, or institution may subscribe to the 4-year RTBs, subject to the applicant's compliance with the requirements of the Issuer.

MINIMUM SUBSCRIPTION. Under the Public Offering, applications to purchase the 4-year RTBs must be for a minimum of Face Value of Five Thousand Pesos (PhP5,000.00) but in no case to exceed Two Million Pesos (PhP2,000,000.00) per applicant in the Public Offering.

APPLICATION AND PAYMENT FOR THE 4-YEAR RTBs. Applicants may purchase the 4-year RTBs under the Public Offering by submitting to the Underwriter the duly accomplished Application to Purchase, with payment in full enclosed, not later than April 26, 2001. If, however, payment is not cleared by Issue Date, the Application to Purchase will be deemed cancelled. Applications received thereafter will be rejected. The submission of the applicant to, and receipt by the Underwriter of, the Application to Purchase shall not be deemed as an acceptance by the Issuer of the Application to Purchase the 4-year RTBs. Confirmation from the Bureau of Treasury is required, and such confirmation shall be conveyed by the Underwriter to the Applicant promptly upon receipt thereof.

EVIDENCE OF OWNERSHIP PRIOR TO LISTING. The Applicant's copy of this application form shall evidence the Applicant's ownership of the purchased 4-year RTBs. The Applicant may formally request from the Underwriter a statement regarding his 4-year RTBs inventory.

ISSUE DATE / COUPON PAYMENT DATE. The 4-year RTBs shall be issued on May 4, 2001 and interest shall be payable quarterly on the relevant Coupon Payment dates. The Coupon Payment date shall be automatically adjusted to fall on the immediately succeeding Banking Day, if such Coupon Payment Date is declared or is allowed to be a non-working or non-Banking Day.

TAXES. Any documentary stamp tax applicable to the 4-year RTBs under this Application to Purchase shall be for the account of the Issuer. Any withholding tax due on the interest payable on the 4-year RTBs shall be for the account of the applicant/investor.

THE 4-YEAR RTBs, AND THIS APPLICATION TO PURCHASE, ARE GOVERNED BY AND SUBJECT TO THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS THEREOF. THE APPLICANT MAY EXAMINE A COPY OF THE TERMS AND CONDITIONS WHICH SHALL BE MADE AVAILABLE FOR EXAMINATION AND PERUSAL BY THE UNDERWRITER/SELLING AGENT AT THE OFFICES OF THE UNDERWRITER/SELLING AGENT DURING NORMAL BUSINESS HOURS.

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OPINION

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EUGENIA D. APOSTOL
Founding Chairman

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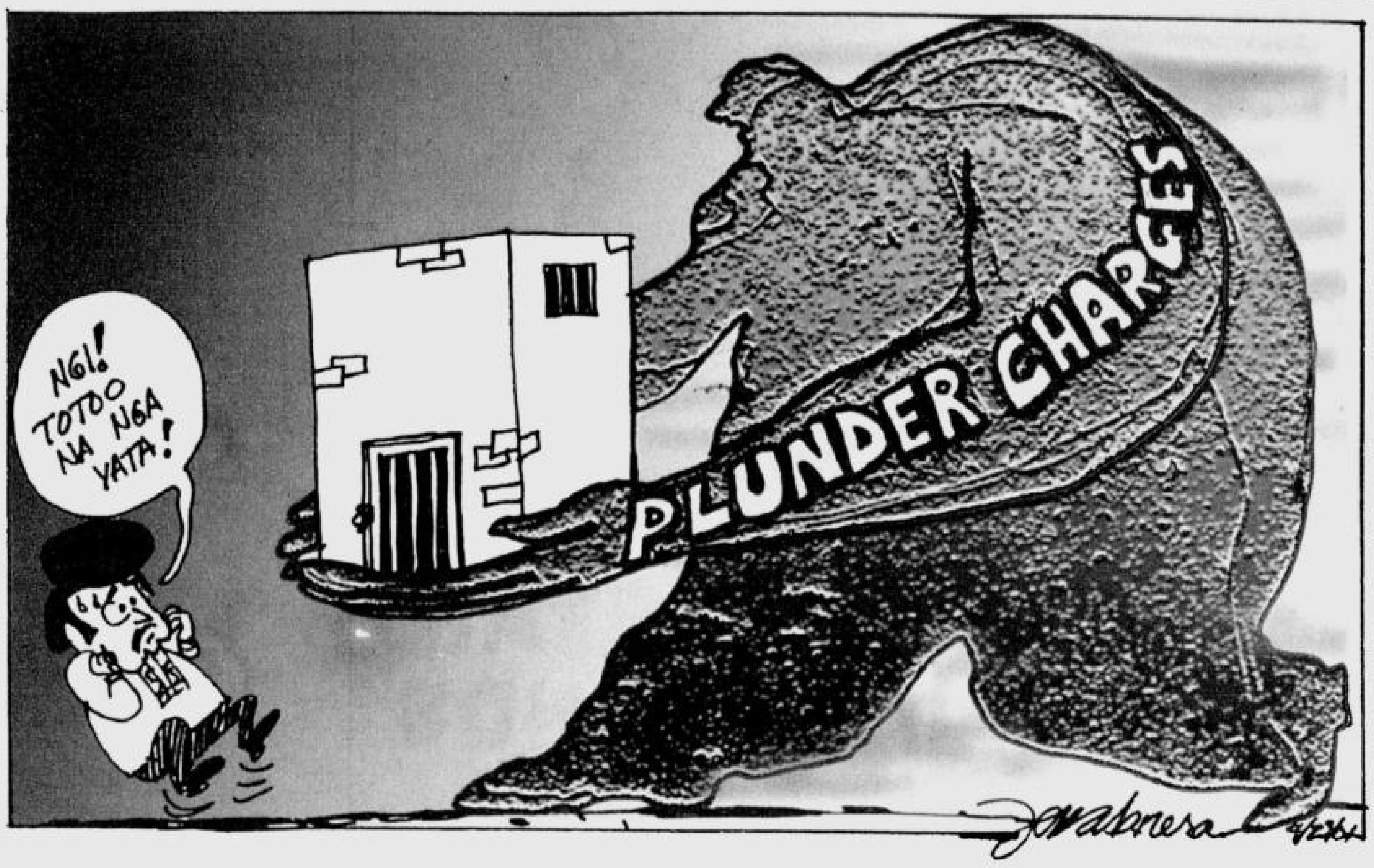

NGI! TOTOO NA NGA YATA!
PLUNDER CHARGES

Flight 541

EDITORIALS

IT'S hardly Easter for kin and pals of the victims of the crash of Air Philippines Flight 541. It took them nearly a year to learn that an official report had been made as early as December on the accident, and even then, the report, if not hemming and hawing in tone, played it safe, merely pointing to pilot error as the probable cause.

The Flight 541 Group, the citizens group that has materialized out of the tragedy, won't take the report sitting down. It is doubtful for one if the report can constitute a valid account of the incident since it was made by a special committee headed by retired Air Force Gen. William Hotchkiss and not by the Air Transportation Office (ATO), which is the legal investigating arm recognized by other countries. Former President Joseph Estrada had formed the committee to appease angry relatives of the victims who had accused ATO of a cover-up.

Hotchkiss is a respected Air Force general, but the committee he headed was faced with the daunting task of delivering a fair and factual report quickly and convincingly in the face of terrible odds. It didn't help any that the airline's first owner was William Gatchalian, a close friend of Estrada. Later, Lucio Tan, who bankrolled Estrada's campaign in 1998, acquired the airline.

The Air Philippines owner's closeness to the former president perhaps explains why the Hotchkiss report was never released during the former administration's watch. Although narrowing the cause to pilot error, the report, once released, could have provided sufficient basis to file legal and moral claims against the airline.

In making the conclusion, the Hotchkiss committee relied on the report of its technical working group that did most of the investigation. Here, the friends and relatives of the victims have reason to worry. As they have pointed out, the inquiry relied on interviews with Air Philippines, Philippine Airlines (PAL), and the ATO.

All three are themselves suspects in the crash: Air Philippines for obvious reasons, PAL because it is also owned by Tan, and the ATO because it checks aircraft fitness and regulates air-control rules and personnel and whose spotty enforcement could have contributed to the mishap.

The report in fact noted "clear lapses" on the part of the Davao International Airport's (DIA) air traffic controllers. It also cited the controllers' policy of giving only a six-minute interval between planes landing at the airport. The deadline heat could have contributed to the crash. Why such a tight policy is observed in an airport that is hardly a La Guardia or even a Ninoy Aquino is perhaps something only the heavens could explain. Definitely, the ATO has much to explain for failing to review or check such a policy that has evolved right under its nose.

The report, according to Carlos Tolosa Capitan II, president of the Flight 541 Group, also did not take into account information from the Flight Data Recorder that had been sent for decoding to the US National Transportation and Safety Board. The device monitored the plane's altitude, air speed and heading. Capitan found "unacceptable" the committee's claim that no data were recorded in the device since it had been damaged by the crash.

Troubling

MORE troubling is a report from a US-based law firm specializing in litigating air accidents and which has been assisting the Flight 541 Group. The report said the plane, built by the Boeing Company, had been decommissioned and left in a "junkyard" for aircraft in Arizona in 1996 until Air Philippines brought it two years later. Previous to that, in 1987, the plane was involved in a near-collision in Nashville, Tennessee and an inquiry by US aviation authorities showed it had mechanical troubles, particularly in its rudder and stabilizers.

What all this means is that the Hotchkiss Committee report is at best half-baked and inconclusive. Definitely it does not lay to rest the country's worst air accident. The mishap killed all of the plane's 138 passengers and crew, dampened consumer and investor confidence in the prospects of the air travel industry, and added to the long list of air accidents that seem to have plagued a nation that was the first in Asia to build its own airline. The confidence in air travel needs to be restored, and the new administration must do nothing less than seek the truth and allow it to take flight.

Japan to get new leader amid public mistrust

NEWS ANALYSIS

Jerome Rivet

> 'At the moment, no single politician can offer us a vision of the future, or tell us which direction Japan should be taking'

TOKYO—Japan will get a new prime minister in a few days against a background of deep public mistrust toward the political parties, as reflected in the recent electoral victories of independent candidates, analysts say.

The ruling Liberal Democratic Party, which has only once briefly loosened its grip on power in almost half a century, finds itself struggling ahead of Tuesday's election to choose its next leader who will also become prime minister.

Japan's all-purpose political party, in which nationalists and liberals co-exist, has suffered a series of spectacular defeats in regional elections in areas once considered LDP strongholds.

Voters in Nagano, Chiba and Akita prefectures have snubbed the LDP's candidates and opted instead to install as their governors independents who campaigned against cronyism and the status quo.

The LDP's current low standing reflects public exasperation with leaders: A recent opinion poll by the Dentsu Institute for Human Studies found that only 3.5 percent of those questioned trusted their politicians and parties.

"At the moment, no single politician can offer us a vision of the future, or tell us which direction Japan should be taking," said celebrated novelist, Ryu Murakami.

"We are left in the dark while everyone knows that this country needs fundamental change," added the author of several novels dealing with crises in Japanese society.

The disillusionment is no less strident among the public at large.

"Since the start of the economic crisis 10 years ago, we have seen almost 10 prime ministers come and go, and had several very expensive stimulus packages. But where is the recovery they are always promising us?" said Akiko a 31-year-old office worker from Tokyo who declined to give her full name.

The reason none of this has so far resulted in any change is because confidence in the fragmented opposition as a viable alternative is even lower.

The main opposition force, the Democratic Party of Japan, is barely rated as a credible party of government, with just 9 percent of voters backing it, compared to 22 percent supporting the LDP, according to a poll by the Asahi Shimbun liberal daily.

By contrast, 60 percent of respondents said they did not support any party.

Independents, who give the impression of being straight-talkers and are highly critical of their party are the public's favorites for the job of premier: They include Junichiro Koizumi, one of the four contenders in Tuesday's election, followed by Makiko Tanaka.

Koizumi has promised to be "a determined leader," who will not shrink from grasping the painful nettle of fundamental reforms.

Tanaka, the redoubtable daughter of a former prime minister, is outspoken in her criticism of the LDP's "top-down" system which she says is already in "meltdown," and rails against the vacuousness of their ideas.

Tanaka's critics claim her outspokenness is mere pandering to populism and a strategem to hide her own lack of concrete policies.

"Politicians today are concerned only with serving the interests of themselves or their faction," said Shintaro Ishihara, who was elected governor of Tokyo as an independent in 1999.

The avowed nationalist author is now the subject of constant speculation over whether he is planning to exploit the LDP's weakness to form a new conservative party and wrest power from it.

Yasuo Tanaka (no relation), another celebrated former novelist and the new governor of Nagano prefecture, is trying to change the image of politicians by other means.

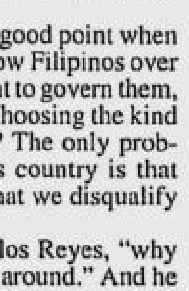
He has set up his office in the lobby of the regional authority's offices with glass walls and an open door in a bid to promote "total transparency."

AFP

Reply

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros



I CANNOT, for the life of me, understand Cesar M. de los Reyes' argument. (Letters, 4/21/01)

He says the defense of freedom of expression can be "twisted by a privileged few, hurting the greater majority of the people." And he proceeds to give the example of an atheist proposing before the US Supreme Court the abrogation of the word "God" in public schools on the ground that it violates the American Constitution. Fortunately, he says, that did not succeed. Unfortunately, a group presumably did succeed in getting CBS to discontinue the series "Touched by an Angel," because it used the word "God." Even more unfortunately, one Madeleine Murray O'Hare succeeded in throwing the reading of the Bible out of US public schools.

"That is religious freedom working in reverse," he says.

I agree 101 percent. But what has that got to do with the people protesting the banning of "Live Show"? The objection would apply to them *if* they were proposing that movies about the Pasyon and songs about praise be stopped from being made on the grounds that they violated aesthetic canons. The objection would apply to them *if* they were lobbying the networks to drop TV shows that mentioned "Mama Mary" because it was offensive to non-Catholics. The objection would apply to them *if* they were pushing to blacklist actors who joined charismatic groups and rituals.

They are not. I myself have always railed against protesters who ended up being as tyrannical as the people they were protesting against. That is precisely why I am defending freedom of expression, which is the freedom of the other party to be heard. The cardinal (pun intended) principle there is still that I may not agree with what you say but I will defend your right to say it.

Which brings me to the second point. De los Reyes says we do ill to call the moral crusaders "moral terrorists."

But they *are* terrorists. You fulminate against a movie on the ground that it is immoral, according to your religious beliefs, and you are a crusader. You stop a movie from being shown on the ground that it is immoral, according to your religious beliefs, and you are a terrorist. Luis Teodoro and Melinda de Jesus also pointed it out in their excellent letter to the editor which came out a couple of weeks ago. The distinction is vital, and to this day I cannot see why some people still cannot grasp it.

Jaime Cardinal Sin shouts his head off in church pulpits about the dangers to the Christian soul of watching "Live Show," he is a crusader. Sonia Ronda, Etta Mendez and others convince themselves and their ka-*chikas* about the mortal perils to their Christian bodies of watching "Live Show," they are crusaders. They get President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to recall "Live Show" because it poses a danger to the public mind, they are terrorists.

Maan Hontiveros has a very good point when she says in an e-mail that we allow Filipinos over 18 to choose the people they want to govern them, why do we prevent them from choosing the kind of movies they want to watch? The only problem with that argument in this country is that someone is bound to propose that we disqualify the *masa* from voting too.

"Let me tell you," says De los Reyes, "why there are many moral crusaders around." And he proceeds to describe the obscenity of the Erap administration, which compelled the righteous to rise up against it.

Yes, but pray, who among the people protesting the banning of "Live Show" did ***not*** share the same righteous indignation at that obscenity and fought to oust Erap? Among the directors, only Carlitos Siguion-Reyna probably did not. But Joey Reyes? He was a pillar of Pagbabago, and remains so. Joel Lamangan, Mel Chionglo, Gil Portes, Soxy Topacio, Nick Tiongson: Who among them did not oppose Erap? Who among them did not help mightily—Reyes, as I keep saying, was tireless in getting show-biz folk to lend their talents to the cause—to oust Erap? There are moral crusaders and there are moral crusaders. Some remain crusaders, others turn terrorist.

De los Reyes wants an example of people protesting tyranny who become tyrannical themselves, he shouldn't look at Reyes and Lamangan, he should look at Cardinal Sin and Ms Macapagal. The latter are the ones who, after protesting the lack of freedom and fair play in Erap's time, now propose to curtail them in their time.

While at this, pray, who among the group protesting the banning of "Live Show" does not share Marilou Diaz-Abaya's sudden alarm at exploitative skin flicks? Pray, who among the group protesting the banning of "Live Show" will not join any crusade to stop the exploitation of women in movies? Chionglo? Topacio? Tiongson? The suggestion that if you protest the banning of "Live Show," you must be defending the exploitation of women in movies is absolutely insane. For this I blame Abaya herself who has clouded the issue—whether deliberately or not, only she can say. She has made it appear as though the people who are fighting for so vital a right as a director being free to make a movie he wants must be fighting for so venal a cause as a producer being free to make starlets do as he pleases. She has made it appear that Lamangan, Chionglo, Reyes, Siguion-Reyna, Topacio, belong to the category of makers of *pito-pito* movies, or share their perversions. Nothing could be more idiotic.

Abaya herself quite incidentally concedes that "Live Show" has high artistic purpose. I saw her on TV saying so. So how in God's name can banning a movie with high artistic purpose possibly stop women from being exploited in movies? How in God's name can it possibly help to improve local movies, which are the only solution to exploitative skin flicks?

De los Reyes says that Abaya has shown that you can make good movies without sex and violence. So have Lamangan, Chionglo, Siguion-Reyna, Topacio, Borlaza, et al. So has Reyes. They have not only made movies that are as good as Abaya's, they have made better. But one thing they are saying, which is that you want to do a serious movie **about** sex and violence, you should be well within your rights to do so. Fellini's movies are about sex, and Peckinpah's movies are about violence, and no one has said they are pornographic. Sex and violence are a part of life, sex and violence are a part of art. They may not naturally be excluded from the dinner table or the movie house any more than politics or religion, Rizal or *muro-ami*.

De los Reyes says I have been quite intense in my columns on this subject. Well, some things have to be defended intensely. Freedom of expression does. Or else we may not be having this conversation one day.

Cheating in six Mindanao provinces?

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

IF Tourism Secretary Dick Gordon is looking for a winning poster to send all around the world to sell the Philippines, he's got one in that beautiful photo appearing in all the newspapers yesterday. It showed President Macapagal, clad in the traditional Ifugao costume, surrounded by similarly attired natives of Ifugao, smiling as she tried her hand at the centuries-old weaving craft of the mountain people, against the backdrop of the smashing world-famous wonder, the Banaue rice terraces. GMA is very photogenic and that photo has all the elements of a winner. Use it, Dick.

* * *

President Macapagal has vowed to crack down on smugglers and haul them to jail, and one indication is that she would soon set up the National Anti-Smuggling Action Center (Nasac), according to her chief of staff, Renato Corona. Let's hope that this proposed Nasac would crack down especially on the smuggling of drugs from abroad. For this is the most pernicious of all the forms of smuggling as it destroys the fabric of society, especially the youth who fall victim to drug pushers at P10 a "*tikim*."

Intelligence sources are one in saying that drug smuggling became big time during the Estrada regime, and the country has become a transshipment point for drug smuggling, particularly Quezon province. They point out that the multibillion-peso drug network has become such a sophisticated operation involving people from the top levels to the bottom of society. There are the legitimate businesses such as construction and computer outfits and shopping malls; the illegal businesses such as the drug trade, smuggling and gambling; the "dirty operations" such as bank robberies, extortion and kidnap for ransom; and the political arena. Like the Mafia, the network is said to have access to judges, lawyers, military and police agents, media people, etc. and could make or break politicians, including presidents.

* * *

Intelligence sources point out that in order to control power, the drug network which is in command of a fortune almost as large as the national budget, invests in various candidates at the local level, from governors to councilors. In fact, sources point out, a number of drug-associated candidates are visible in this election. Among the areas of operation of the drug network are Metro Manila, Cebu City, Davao City, Ozamiz City and Iligan City, as well as select Mindanao provinces. Another way to control power is to manipulate the elections. There is a report that a certain notorious group involved in various illegal activities, including drug trafficking, will be manipulating the elections in six provinces in Mindanao in return for money considerations for certain candidates. As in past elections, it's those senatorial candidates who hover at the tail-end of the Magic 13 and the upper slots of the losing column who are most vulnerable to manipulation for money. This is why it's good to be able to pull out of that danger zone.

* * *

Reports indicate that the *dagdag-bawas* would be done in the two Zamboangas, the two Misamis provinces and the two Lanaos. There's no politics involved—only money. For instance, in the 1998 elections, then Bulacan Gov. Obet Pagdanganan, who was running for the Senate under Lakas, was asked, during those crucial days when the votes from Mindanao were being awaited in Manila, whether he could match the P38 million that another candidate was reportedly shelling out to buy the results of provincial tally sheets. Of course, Pagdanganan couldn't and he lost. Let's hope he doesn't lose again this time.

In Limay, Bataan, where I tagged along with my husband during the visit of President Macapagal to the petrochemical park there, I had a chance to chat with PNOC chair Sergio Apostol while they waited for GMA. Apostol opined that People Power Coalition candidates in the danger zone, such as Bobby Tañada and Pagdanganan, ought to have at least about P5 million ready to enable them to fight *dagdag-bawas* in the crucial canvassing period.

This columnist had a chance recently to inform Comelec Chair Alfredo Benipayo about this report of massive fraud in Mindanao provinces; perhaps it would also be good for Namfrel and the PPCRV to concentrate there, and for the NGOs and church organizations in the areas to launch citizens' watchgroups there. The citizens can play watchdog but it's the Comelec that ought to prosecute the cheaters as cheating thwarts the people's will.

* * *

New GSIS general manager Winston Garcia wrote to explain that the GSIS has decided to channel all its reinsurance needs to the National Reinsurance Corp. (called National Re in the industry for short) in order to make its operations more efficient. Specifically, Garcia's order meant giving the business to the top three reinsurers, who are mostly foreign brokers. The smaller brokers claim, however, that this move shuts out many small- and medium-sized local reinsurance brokers who had been doing business with the GSIS over many years. In defense, Garcia said this only means that the smaller brokers ought to shape up in order to qualify in the big league.

The smaller brokers lament, however, that the new GSIS management has failed to give proper cognizance to the role of the small- and medium-sized brokers who are the ones giving/quoting the best protection available in the market at least cost. The "small-time" brokers remind Garcia that they are duly licensed and accredited by the insurance commission. They stress that they are competent people who also hail from the local insurance industry, but who are now being deprived of the chance to compete and show their own expertise. They denounce Garcia's order as "anti-Filipino" and resent the insinuation that they are not trustworthy at all.

* * *

The smaller ones question why only the top three reinsurers were favored, when there is a wide array of top reinsurers used by brokers. As a broker put it, "This move is very discriminatory and may not be taken lightly by other top local and foreign reinsurers." Moreover, the small brokers question the GSIS' move to limit its business only to the big players when National Re itself also acts like a broker by farming out their reinsurance cessions from the GSIS to their favored reinsurers. The small brokers are asking that the National Re be investigated on its past transactions to determine whether there is a scheme being legitimized by Garcia's group.

Sources said that Garcia has a group that drafted the master plan even before he joined the GSIS, and that this group had already conspired to make the National Re the beneficiary of all its business. Among those mentioned as behind Garcia are Amalio Mallari, senior vice president of GSIS Housing; Boy Mijares, Jardine Insurance Brokers; the Stronghold Insurance Group of Dave Mercado; and Willy Bantayan, National Re president.

Old loves

HIGH BLOOD

Angela Carmen

WE'D also like to know the concerns of the sixtysomething and above, what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them sit back, content that all's well with their world and with themselves. —**Ed.**

I WAS 19 years old and he was 23, during those glorious bygone days of youth. I had graduated a year before from an exclusive girls' school, while he was taking evening classes at a university. We first met when he visited the company where I worked, which had business dealings with his own firm. This visit was followed by noon-break phone calls and short walks to the bus stop after work. Although I had already finished my college studies then, I decided to enroll in the evening classes in the same university where he studied, taking further undergraduate subjects. And that was the start of a wonderful loving relationship which never went beyond snacks-and-movie dates. We were both innocents in our youth, living for the simple joy of being together after office hours in that, all too short, two-subject-period evening class. He would bring me home every night after class by bus. How we wished that bus ride would last much longer than its usual 20-minute run!

Our young love was doomed from the very start. I had very strict parents who were overprotective of their children. He visited me at home only once, and after a cold reception from my parents, never ventured inside my house again. And although we both loved each other then, and tried our best to ignore the differences in our upbringing, our relationship never had a chance to blossom.. After about six months, my universe collapsed when I received a letter from him breaking up our relationship because, to use his own words, "our lives were worlds apart." We had a serious, non-emotional talk afterwards, but nothing changed. To say that I was devastated would be an understatement. But being convent-bred and having grown up in an environment of discipline and obedience, I tried to take this seeming tragedy in my young life in stride. It was a very difficult time for me, with my particularly observant sisters noticing my red eyes and the tears always lurking behind my lids, ready to brim over at the slightest word of concern. For the next weeks, I tried to forget him, but I was listless in my work and my activities. And once, after our breakup, I noticed him one late evening after I came home from my evening class, standing at the corner where I would usually alight from the bus. He just stood there, in the dark shadows, not attempting to approach or talk to me. And a couple of days later, I received an unsigned copy of the words of Vic Damone's song, "Just Say I Love Her." I knew it came from him. I knew it was an attempt to communicate with me again.

After these two incidents, I decided that in order to keep my sanity, I had to snap out of the bouts of loneliness that had engulfed me. I wrote him a letter saying that a breakup should be complete—no unsigned notes, no unexpected appearances, no half-measures. I then went into a shopping spree for clothes and shoes, determined to forget. I decided to go out with friends, meet new people, get out of the doldrums. And I succeeded. Life picked up again and I was back in circulation.

In the two years that followed, three of my sisters eventually became his close friends, being in the same choral group which sang upon invitation and on special occasions. During this time, they would occasionally practice at our house, and I would see him when I happened to visit my parents then. We were very civil, and I never exchanged more than the usual polite amenities with him.

This happened way back in 1961, exactly 40 years ago today. I had since then married a wonderful doctor in January 1963, had five children, who are now all professionals, and lived a happy family life. In 1994, my husband died. I learned later on through my sisters that he had also married, in May 1963, and had four children who are also professionals today. During those 40 years, I saw him briefly two more times—during the wake of my mother in 1987, and that of my father in 1990.

Last Christmas, at a family reunion, my sister informed me that they had attended the wake of his wife, who had died mid-December. I felt sorry for his loss and said I would have attended the wake if I had known. And much later, when I received a phone call from him when he was at my sister's house, it was the first real conversation we had after 40 years. He invited me for lunch the following Thursday. I was a little nervous as the day approached. Would I still recognize him? Would his hair be gray, or would he have no hair at all? Would he be stooped, wrinkled? Would he have the same expectations of me? After all, he was now 63 years old, and I was 59.

And when we finally met for lunch, seeing each other after 40 long years, he sat across me at the table, insisting he wanted to look at my face. Perhaps noticing my own wrinkles, or the wisps of gray hair curling at my brow? We were like two former protagonists...watching carefully and sizing each other up. As I looked at him, and as we talked, I noticed that the sense of humor that first attracted me to him was still there, the old repartee we had still existed. The gleam and sparkle in his eyes had slightly dimmed. His walk was slower, his movements measured. And to top it all, he possessed a Senior Citizen's Card which he flashed at every opportunity like a badge of honor to his seniority, to his many accomplishments in life. It took us about five hours to consume lunch. We were asking questions and hoping for the right answers, laughing at funny incidents way, way back, musing at what might have been. At the end of that lunch, we had only covered the first five years of our separation with poignant reminiscences of past and treasured moments...of sharing the lives we led with our own families. And with roughly 35 more years of absence to account for, we agreed to meet again.

Forty long years is the span of a lifetime. Forty years can indeed change one's appearance and perceptions. But not feelings. Even as we first met again after both being widowed, we were aware of a shared chemistry long held dormant. We both had a full, happy life with our respective families, and are both enjoying our children and grandchildren. And yet, we feel that the many years that had gone by never really succeeded in completely deleting from our memories those glorious days of our youth and the feelings that we once shared. And could share again. Who knows? Meeting each other again after 40 years under auspicious circumstances is, after all, a gift not given to everyone.

Angela Carmen is due to retire soon from teaching in an exclusive girls' school.

US policy still to get rid of Fidel Castro

FEATURE

Anthony Boadle

WASHINGTON—Forty years after the White House backed a disastrous landing by Cuban exiles to try to oust Fidel Castro, the goal of US policy is still the same: get rid of Castro.

After the invasion failed, and numerous assassination plots proved fruitless, the United States tried to squeeze the island's economy to bring down its communist government.

But the trade embargo—toughened in 1996 with the revoking of US visas for executives in some foreign firms that invest in Cuba—has little to show for itself four decades later.

Political experts say Castro is more entrenched than ever.

And President George W. Bush is not expected to change US policy any time soon due to his perceived political debt to the Cuban exile community in Miami after last November's election photo finish in Florida.

Bush's brother Jeb is up for reelection as Florida governor in two years and the president is not likely to do anything to sabotage his sibling's political future, said Gillian Clissold, director of Georgetown University's Caribbean Project.

"The conservative sector of the Cuban American community has a double hold on the Bush administration," she said.

"One is the perceived debt—rightly or wrongly—regarding his own election. The other is his brother's upcoming election in which Cuban American support will be important," she said.

The embargo has come under a lot of pressure in the last few years from American big business that has turned Cuba into a poster child in its drive to get rid of trade sanctions as a tool of foreign policy.

US farmers, hurt by depressed commodity prices, lobbied hard to lift the embargo and regain access to the Cuban market just 150 kilometers off-shore. So did the pharmaceutical industry.

Republican politicians from farm states joined liberal Democrats, long opposed to a measure they say only hurts the Cuban population, managed last year to amend the embargo to allow food and medicine sales to Cuba.

The softening of the embargo was limited by a ban on US public or private credit to finance the sales, introduced by staunchly anti-Castro Cuban American legislators from Florida.

The Bush administration has yet to publish licensing rules needed for selling grain, rice, meat and drugs to the island.

"We are unlikely to see any significant rapprochement with Cuba for the next two years," said Clissold.

"The leverage of the conservatives in the Cuban American community will outweigh the impatience of the business sector," she said.

Cuban Americans are increasingly divided on the best way to foster change in Cuba and prepare for the day Castro, 74, is no longer around—most likely when biology has its way.

Jose Pertierra was 9 when he visited his uncle Roberto in a Havana jail three months after he was captured at the Bay of Pigs. "He was still wearing battle fatigues," he recalled.

His uncle was one of the 1,500 CIA-trained exiles who had landed on April 17, 1961 in the short-lived attempt to start an uprising against Castro.

Pertierra's family soon left Cuba for exile in the United States. But, despite the lack of freedom under Castro, the immigration lawyer opposes the embargo and believes engaging Cuba is the only way to bring about change.

"US policy has failed in Cuba and will continue to fail, until the embargo is lifted and Cuban national sovereignty is respected," he said.

Clissold said US policy was still based on the fallacy that economic pressure will lead to political change in Cuba, where the economy has recovered from the deep crisis of the early 1990s following the implosion of the Soviet Union.

Cuban Americans and conservative Republicans want the Bush administration to tighten the screws of the embargo and allow lawsuits against foreign investors, using assets confiscated after the 1959 revolution.

The clearest indication that Bush will sway to the influence of the hard-liners has been his intention to nominate Otto Reich, a Cuban-born former diplomat to the top Latin American policy post at the State Department.

"Reich is a big step back," said Pertierra. "He is a Cold War man who will work against the trend that exists, even in the Republican Party, to step up relations and trade with Cuba so that the United States can influence the transition there."

One sector of the US government that has distanced itself from a rigid Cold War posture on Cuba is the Pentagon, and Bush is expected to listen to the military.

"The Pentagon has become increasingly impatient with a political climate they perceive prohibits them from engaging the Cubans on security issues that are of the most concern to the United States," Clissold said.

The Pentagon concluded in a report to Congress five years ago that Cuba no longer poses a military threat to the United States and Washington should be interested in a peaceful transition on the island, to avoid a mass exodus or violent upheaval that could require American involvement one day.

The US military would rather be sitting down with Cuban officials discussing today's security problems, migrant and narcotics smuggling. ***Reuters***

Human interest photo, not gay bashing

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

LAST April 18, the Metro section of the INQUIRER featured the photo of two gays engaged in a friendly boxing match. One of the sparring parties was seen raising his wrist to hit the face of his opponent. The other was pushing him away with both hands.

The photo caption read: RAGING GAYS. Gay inmates of the Quezon City Jail flail away at each other in a boxing match at the jail's basketball court. Jail authorities said the sparring was "just for fun."

But some readers did not find the picture funny. They consider it offensive, anti-gay and insensitive to the feelings of the gay community.

Jojo of Makati e-mailed this message: "I'm so offended with such a nonsense photo published in your newspaper. I'm gay and I'm so sick of other people stereotyping about gays like your homophobic photographer. It looks like you're on your way of being a tabloid with what you're putting in your paper.

"It's such a waste of paper and ad resources. Even if the photo was taken or the event was just for fun, it still is not good. Making fun of people in general is not good."

From New York, USA, a disappointed (as he describes himself) Ramon Caindec wrote to say that "at this time and age you are still showing your anti-gay bias by showing two gays sparring in a jail. Is this some sort of filler when you have less than worthy news to publish? This lapse in judgment has disappointed me especially since I access your website daily from Manhattan for my dose of noteworthy Philippine news."

Before taking up the letters with the editor in chief, I talked to the photographer concerned (Edwin Bacasmas) to find out the circumstances behind the photo. I felt his account would be helpful in resolving the complaints raised by the readers.

Human interest

According to Bacasmas, his assigned beat is Quezon City and its adjoining areas. In the morning of April 15, Easter Sunday, he went around his beat looking for scenes that can make the pages of the newspaper.

It was a dull day. There was not much activity on the streets. Only the malls, parks and restaurants were alive with people. The rest of Quezon City seemed to be at a standstill.

He decided to drop by the Quezon City Jail to find out if there was anything there worth getting on film. While slowly pacing the second floor of the jail, his attention was caught by the festivities at the basketball court below. The inmates were engaged in various social and athletic activities to celebrate Easter.

A boxing match of gay inmates was in progress. Bacasmas was attracted by the energy and enthusiasm shown by the sparring parties. They gave their all amid the boisterous cheers of the spectators. Seeing the human-interest angle of the scene, Bacasmas quickly took a picture of the boxing match. That photo was published three days later.

Was the photo aimed at bashing the Filipino gay community? "Of course not," was the quick retort of the editor in chief when shown the letter-complaints. She explained that the photo was published because it had a good human interest element in it. It is not every day that gays engage in friendly boxing sessions among themselves.

She said it was only incidental that the participants in the boxing match belong to the third sex. The photo was not meant to make fun of the members of the third sex or put them in a bad light before the "straight" men and women of our society.

To prove her point, she stated that on a number of occasions before, the INQUIRER published photos of housewives engaged in hair-pulling acts, or street children fighting over inconsequential matters, or young adults mixing it up for sheer bravado.

The common denominator of these photos was their human-interest angle, and nothing else. In other words, there was no big deal about the photo.

The editor in chief concluded by saying that the readers concerned may have overreacted to the picture. They may have translated their own fears in an otherwise innocuous photo of an activity inside a prison house.

* * *

A reader, Richard Chu, chafes at the attention the INQUIRER has been giving to the recent pronouncements of deposed President Joseph Estrada. Obviously an anti-Erap, Chu expressed displeasure over the fact that three months after he was ousted, Erap still manages to hog the headlines of major newspapers, including this newspaper.

He wrote: "Of late, he has been crying 'foul' against the Macapagal administration, the 'rich of Makati,' the Sandiganbayan, etc. demanding that he be given justice. His silly pronouncements are beginning to sound really annoying, if not insulting.

"How could a person who has total disregard for the rule of law claim it as his own defense? Could the PDI do us readers a favor and not banner his 'troubles' on the front page? They're not newsworthy anymore. I would welcome more news about what the Macapagal administration is doing to help the country."

Much as she may want to oblige, the editor in chief said she cannot and will not bar the publication of news about the deposed president. As long as Erap's statements or actions relate to current or past issues that, in her judgment, should be known by the public, the INQUIRER will publish them.

She explained that news is news even if it is bad news or comes from somebody whom many hate or dislike. It is up to the readers to determine whether news about the former president is worthy of belief or should be disregarded as coming from an unreliable source.

On the matter of putting out more news about the things the Macapagal administration is doing to help the country, the editor in chief curtly replied, "that's the job of the Malacañang press office, we are not the propaganda arm of the administration."

* * *

The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

THEY SAID

One-sided

"A unilateral ceasefire is like a man trying to marry a woman without her consent."

—Sen. Loren Legarda-Leviste saying that both the military and rebels should observe a ceasefire during the release of a captive police official

No chance

"Do cows fly? Is there a snowball in hell?"

—Lupita Aquino-Kashiwahara on brother Butz Aquino's prediction that the opposition will sweep the May elections if former President Joseph Estrada is jailed

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Distorted view of National Artist's selection process

WE, members of the Council of Peers of the Visual Arts sector for the National Artist Award, state that Neal Cruz in his column (PDI, 3/28/01) presented a distorted view of the conduct of selecting the National Artist this year.

In the interest of accountability, we do not mind our judgment being subjected to extensive criticism and analysis. As practitioners in the art world, we encourage debate and discussion. But Cruz's false reporting, intrigue-laden misrepresentation and the manner by which he tried to discredit the character of some of us and undermine the integrity of the entire council are irresponsible and, therefore, deserve our strongest rebuke.

Facts are: Araceli Dans did not nominate Larry Alcala; Prof. Patrick D. Flores did not sponsor and was not hired to promote the bid of Francisco Coching, as no one in the council is allowed to nominate and campaign; and Prof. Emmanuel Torres' advocacy as a critic is not "lawyering."

We also take issue with the way Cruz trivializes without careful consideration the popular art of two of this year's nominees. Larry Alcala and Francisco Coching have vital contributions to the country's visual arts, and their being cartoonists and illustrators must not be held against them.

Through a judicious process of deliberation in which varied opinions contended and an acceptable consensus reached, we, after casting four secret ballots supervised by the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, endorsed two painters (Ang Kiukok and Diosdado Lorenzo) and two comics artists from a field of 14 as nominees for National Artist on behalf of the sector we are privileged to represent. It was farthest from our minds that in return, our dignity would be imperiled.

We can, of course, dismiss this unfortunate instance as just one of the turns in the current art scene's dark political routine. But that would be uncharitable to many good colleagues and also to our own motivations in serving in the council. We were thinking that by playing our roles as jurors well and by being sensitive to the call of duty, we were doing something, no matter how modest, to raise the standards of recognition in the arts.

Cruz proved us wrong. He maligned our sincere intentions and cast doubts on our integrity and the very serious responsibility of choosing a National Artist.—**NAPOLEON V. ABUEVA, CORAZON S. ALVINA, VIRGILIO A. AVIADO, IMELDA CAJIPE-ENDAYA, ARACELI L. DANS, PATRICK D. FLORES, ALICE G. GUILLERMO, ROD PARAS-PEREZ, EMMANUEL TORRES, BOBI VALENZUELA**

LETTERS

Why is gov't trying to wrest control of SMC?

I AM surprised by the amount of energy Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo is expending on getting San Miguel Corp. back under government control. The company is doing well under its present management and board, so I hardly see the reason for the apparent urgency that he gives to this particular task.

For one, I support San Miguel's taking back control of Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines. If there is one thing difficult about doing a consumer business in this country, it is setting up a local distribution network. This is something Coke and San Miguel have, so it may be good for them to bring their operations together and save money rather than doing things separately.

All the other things that Marcelo is criticizing about San Miguel are business decisions whose results will be seen later on. But for him to claim that the present management is in danger of dissipating the company's assets and business is to stretch the argument too much.

I think the real reason the solicitor general wants to get San Miguel back is that the company has always been treated as one of the perks of being a government ally. If that's the thing, then what makes this administration different from all the others?

I hope that President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will live up to her promise to make this government one that is for public service and not private profit. It should wrap up its case against Danding Cojuangco and let the courts decide who really owns the San Miguel shares.

But it is clear that San Miguel is not a government corporation. So long as it is making good money for its shareholders and employees, the government should not intervene in its management in the hope of putting in its own friends and allies in lucrative positions.—**RENE B. BERMIO, GSIS Metro Home, Bldg. 25, Unit C-2, Anonas St., Sta. Mesa, Manila**

Should we experiment with human lives?

SENATE President Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was correct when he opined that cloning human beings poses the danger of separating sex from its procreative nature.

To a certain extent, contraception and artificial insemination also achieve this. The INQUIRER should be thanked for allowing such an issue to be the topic of a debate.

As a former student of molecular biology and biotechnology, it is clear to me that man's ever-increasing scientific knowledge makes it possible for him to "enter God's exclusive realm," which is creation. Britain's House of Lords has already authorized experimentation on human cloning. Indeed, they probably have the necessary technology already.

The question, then, is not whether we can clone humans, but whether we should. The Philippines does not have the resources to undertake cloning yet, but it must watch intently as others begin the procedure of replacing rats in the laboratory with humans. Even if cloning were to benefit humankind medically, is it right to save some at the cost of experimenting on others?

Remember that many men will be "created" in these cloning laboratories. As in any scientific experiment, there will be successes and failures. It should be noted that at present a rather large number of rats perish in the lab.—**MIGUEL LIM, 168 Lipa St., Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City**

First independent to win Senate seat

THIS is in reference to the letter of Erick San Juan last April 7, 2001 alleging that reelectionist Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan was suffering from a "memory lapse" when he said he was the "first independent candidate to win a Senate seat."

San Juan argued that it was the late Sen. Lorenzo Tañada (who, according to him, ran under the independent banner of the Nationalist Citizen's Party) and the late Sen. Magnolia Antonino who were the first two independent candidates to win Senate seats. (We are ignoring the other accusations of San Juan which were nothing but *non-sequiturs.*)

In this connection, we're afraid to say that it may be San Juan who forgot his history and who is suffering from amnesia.

In the book titled, "Elections in the Philippines: From Pre-colonial to the Present" written in 1996 by Professors Clarita R. Carlos and Rommel Banlaoi and published by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, we read: "In 1953, 5 Nacionalistas, 2 Democratic Party candidates, and one Citizen's Party candidate (Tañada) won." It was therefore clear that Tañada belonged to a political party, the Citizen's Party. It was not however the Nationalist Citizen's Party, as erroneously claimed by San Juan.

"The Citizen's Party was organized on May 4, 1949 at the residence of Raul Manglapus to wage social reforms in the country. Its founders included Narciso Pimentel, Jaime Ferrer, Soc Rodrigo and Manglapus himself. The party invited Lorenzo Tañada, at that time a member of the Quirino Wing of the Liberal Party, to be its founding president. It was not until 1957, when Tañada joined Sen. Claro M. Recto to be his running mate, a renegade Nacionalista when the Nationalist Citizen's Party was born."

In the midst of the 1969 senatorial elections, reelectionist Sen. Gaudencio Antonino, a true blue Liberal senator of eight years, died in a helicopter crash. Following the common tradition in Philippine electoral politics, he was replaced by his wife, Magnolia, not as an independent but as a substitute candidate of the Liberal Party. Thus "in the 1969 senatorial election results, the Nacionalistas outnumbered the Liberals, 6-2."

On Page 198 of another book by Banlaois and Carlos titled, "Political Parties in the Philippines: From 1900 to Present," they wrote: "The 1995 elections resulted in the overall victory of the Lakas-Laban coalition. In the Senate, the coalition gained 9 seats while the remaining seats went to Anna Dominique Coseteng of the NPC, Miriam Defensor-Santiago of the PRP and Gregorio Honasan, an independent candidate."

Not until the election of Honasan in 1995 has there ever been an independent candidate elected to the Senate since its establishment in 1961.—**GERARDO V. EUSEBIO, chief political officer, Office of Sen. Gregorio B. Honasan, 2nd Floor Videospecs Bldg., Fernando Ma. Guerrero corner Julian Felipe Streets, CCP Complex, Pasay City**

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Marketing Intelligence: How To Locate And Use Competitive Information To Increase Market Share Nicanor Gabunada, SVP, Sales and Marketing, ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corporation

Marketing Organization: Building Competitive Advantage Through People Jose Mari Franco, Vice-President, Asia, Avon Cosmetics, Incorporated | Benjie Jimenez, Director for Marketing Asia Procter and Gamble Philippines.

Marketing Budget Control: Linking Consumer Attitudes And Purchase Behavior To Maximize Resource Allocation Efficiency Ed Roa, Managing Director, AC Nielsen Philippines | Darrah Estrada, Managing Director, Taylor Nelson Sofres Philippines

Bottom Line Control: Instituting Financial Standards And Know How In Marketing Cesar Purisima, Chairman, SGV and Company, Inc.

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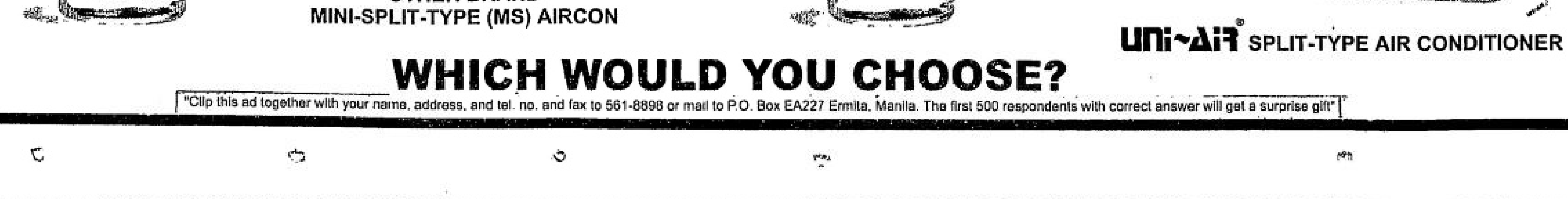

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2 killed in Israel suicide bombing

JERUSALEM—An bomb explosion near a bus in a Tel Aviv suburb during the morning rush hour Sunday killed two people and injured 19, police and rescue services said.

Police suspected one of the dead was a Palestinian suicide bomber who blew himself up in a crowd of people waiting for a bus, Israeli radio stations reported. The injured included a seriously wounded child, rescue services spokesman Yeruham Mandola said.

The explosion in the Tel Aviv suburb of Kfar Saba went off around 9 a.m. at a busy intersection as commuters were heading to work Sunday, the beginning of the work week in Israel. Ambulances and rescue services rushed to the scene, and police sealed off the area to search for additional explosives.

Two bombs set off by Palestinian militants went off in Kfar Saba last week but no one was killed. Israel has been rocked by repeated explosions carried out by Palestinian militants since the Palestinian uprising began seven months ago.

Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has pledged swift and harsh retaliation for such attacks, and Israel has carried out several raids in recent weeks following mortar attacks by Palestinians.

The latest bomb blast came as Israel eased some punitive measures against the Palestinians on Sunday, the army said. Israel radio said the move was the result of a US-sponsored meeting between Israeli and Palestinian security chiefs on Saturday night.

Sharon's office said the sides agreed in the talks to resume security cooperation, which has broken down during the fighting, but the Palestinians denied any joint work with Israeli security officials. The Palestinians said the sides discussed the possibility of resuming the peace process.

"This was not only a security meeting but also a political one with the idea that political negotiations would make our work much easier," said Abdel Razek Majaidah, a senior Palestinian security official and a participant in the talks.

Israel's Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said Israel was willing to hold talks as part of its determined efforts to stop the bloodshed that has killed 476 people.

"Violence cannot be stopped only by the use of force. It's also necessary to talk," said Peres, an architect of the first Palestinian accord with the Palestinians in 1993. "I think we have to try to make a breakthrough. It is possible, even if it is difficult."

However, Israeli Cabinet Minister Danny Naveh insisted Sunday that all talks with the Palestinians were aimed at ending the hostilities, not resuming the peace talks. Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon has repeatedly said he will not negotiate "under fire."

According to Israel radio, the Palestinians agreed in the four-hour meeting, held at a crossing between the Gaza Strip and Israel, to work to stop the shooting from the areas they control, Israel radio reported. *AP*

Princess Masako seen expecting test-tube leader

LONDON—Japanese royal watchers believe that Crown Princess Masako is expecting the world's first test-tube emperor after secretly undergoing fertility treatment last month, the Independent on Sunday reported here.

Japanese courtiers announced last week that the 37-year-old princess, who has been married for eight years and has had one miscarriage, is around six or seven weeks pregnant.

Doctors and journalists believe that she has undergone in-vitro fertilization after increasing anxiety about the future of the imperial throne, the Independent said.

The Japanese imperial line claims descent from the Sun Goddess more than 2,000 years ago but is currently suffering a distinct shortage of heirs.

Since Princess Masako married Crown Prince Naruhito in 1993, the couple have been under constant scrutiny for signs they were expecting a child.

Last week's happy news came a month and a half after one of Japan's leading infertility experts was appointed as the princess' personal doctor, the Independent reported.

It added, however, that there is no evidence that the royal couple have chosen the sex of their child, and only a male can succeed to the imperial throne. *AFP*

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5. The entries will be separated according to area, as follows: GMA, LUZON, VISAYAS, MINDANAO.
6. All entries will be drawn in the presence of a DOH-BFAD representative.
7. Shall any conflict arise from the drawing of entries, the decision of the Sugarland and/or Agency representative will be deemed final subject to the concurrence from the DOH-BFAD representative
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11. The grand draw and corresponding cut-off date is as follows:
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12. Winner's will be announced over ABS-CBN'S MTB variety show and will also be published in newspapers and notified by registered mail as to where and when they can claim their prizes.
13. The winner should bring 2 valid IDs with picture and the letter/telogram from Sugarland when claiming their prizes.
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16. Prizes are not convertible to cash and are not transferrable.
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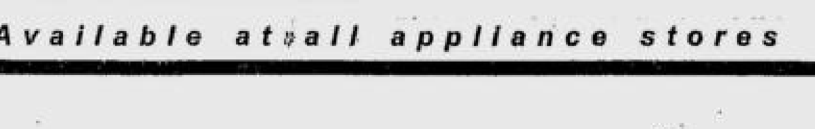

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US spy plane guided Peru jet in shootdown

BOWERS

WASHINGTON—A tragedy over the Peruvian jungle, in which a US missionary and her child lost their lives, took a dramatic turn late Saturday, when the United States acknowledged it had been feeding intelligence to a Peruvian warplane that shot down the aircraft carrying the Americans.

"An unarmed US government tracking aircraft was in the area and provided location data for the subsequent intercept mission that was conducted by the Peruvian air force," a State Department official told AFP on condition of anonymity.

The official did not specify which of the US government agencies involved in a program helping Peru detect and monitor suspect aircraft "to stem the flow of illegal drugs," was operating the surveillance plane.

But according to the official, the final call in the missionary plane episode had rested with the Peruvians. "Peruvian authorities are responsible for identifying the aircraft and deciding any action," the official said.

US anti-drug surveillance flights have been suspended pending an investigation into the incident, the State Department official said.

The admission capped events that began Friday when a Peruvian Air Force plane shot at a Cessna 185 in the skies of northern Peru, killing US missionary Veronica Bowers, 36, and her seven-month-old daughter Charity, but leaving her husband and son, seven, unharmed.

The Peruvian defense ministry expressed "deep regret" for opening fire on the plane, about an hour's flying time from the town of Iquitos Friday, saying the air force pilot had mistaken the Christian missionaries' aircraft for a planeload of narcotics traffickers. *AFP*

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Indonesia braces for 'escalating' political conflict

JAKARTA—Indonesia is bracing itself for weeks of political confrontation as President Abdurrahman Wahid remains determined to stay at the helm of the nation in the face of the parliament's determination to censure him again, analysts said Sunday.

"One cannot expect the coming weeks to be peaceful with the head-on collision between the political elites," said Kusnanto Anggoro of the private Centre for Strategic International Studies (CSIS) think tank.

He said political developments both at inside and outside parliament point to an "escalating and irreconcilable conflict" between the country's political elite.

"The top echelons in politics hold the key to the near future and they do not appear to work for a compromise. On the contrary each camp appears to be more and more entrenched in their position," Anggoro said.

Erry Rijana Harjapamekas, a pro-democracy activist who is also president of the state Tambang Timah tin mining company, said he believed that despite the hardening of stance, both sides would finally realize that confrontation is not in the interest of the nation.

"It is our way, when a certain point is reached, the political elite will not come to a clash," Harjapamekas said, pointing out that predictions of violence when vice-president Megawati Sukarnoputri failed to become president despite winning the 1999 election proved to be wide of the mark.

A coalition of Muslim groups threw their support for Wahid's presidential candidacy back then but are now among Wahid's fiercest detractors.

The lower house, the People's Representative Council (DPR) has been busy in recent weeks preparing a second memorandum, or censure motion, against Wahid.

It is expected to be issued on April 30 when the house meets to discuss the president's reply to a first censure motion issued in February.

Wahid has remained defiant, refusing to resign as president or relinquish the running of the government to Megawati. Instead, he has warned of chaos if he is ousted.

He said several regions would secede and warned that he could not control the reaction of hundreds of thousands of his supporters.

"Remember that there are two determining elements in politics, the first one is fact, and the second one is force," Wahid was quoted by the leading Kompas daily as saying in Tegal, Central Java on Saturday.

"On force, I have been very preoccupied by the 400,000 people who wants to come to Jakarta," Wahid said, referring to his grassroot supporters. *AFP*

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, April 23, 2001
2nd Week of Easter

1st Reading: Acts 4:23-31
Gospel: Jn 3:1-8

Among the Pharisees there was a ruler of the Jews named Nicodemus. He came to Jesus by night and said, "Rabbi, we know that you have come from God to teach us, for no one can perform miraculous signs like yours unless God is with him."

Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again from above."

Nicodemus said, "How can there be rebirth for a grown man? Who could go back to his mother's womb and be born again?" Jesus replied, "Truly, I say to you: No one can enter the kingdom of God without being born of water and Spirit. What is born of the flesh is flesh, and what is born of the Spirit is spirit. Because of this, don't be surprised when I say: 'You must be born again from above.'

The wind blows where it pleases and you hear its sound, but you don't know where it comes from or where it is going. It is like that with everyone who is born of the Spirit."

Commentary

Here is a clear indication that Jesus' message of God's reign did gradually penetrate the pharisaic ranks. For after all, such good news is for everyone! The only condition is to let oneself be led by the Spirit of Jesus. This is the reason why at his death on the cross and at his first appearance to the disciples, the Jesus is said to have given his spirit (breath). This was supposed to be the dynamic force that enabled them to get out of their cowardice and self-recriminations,—to be what they were not used to be for the sake of God's reign. That very same Spirit of Jesus had been poured forth on us in our baptismal consecration. Do we let this Spirit lead us?

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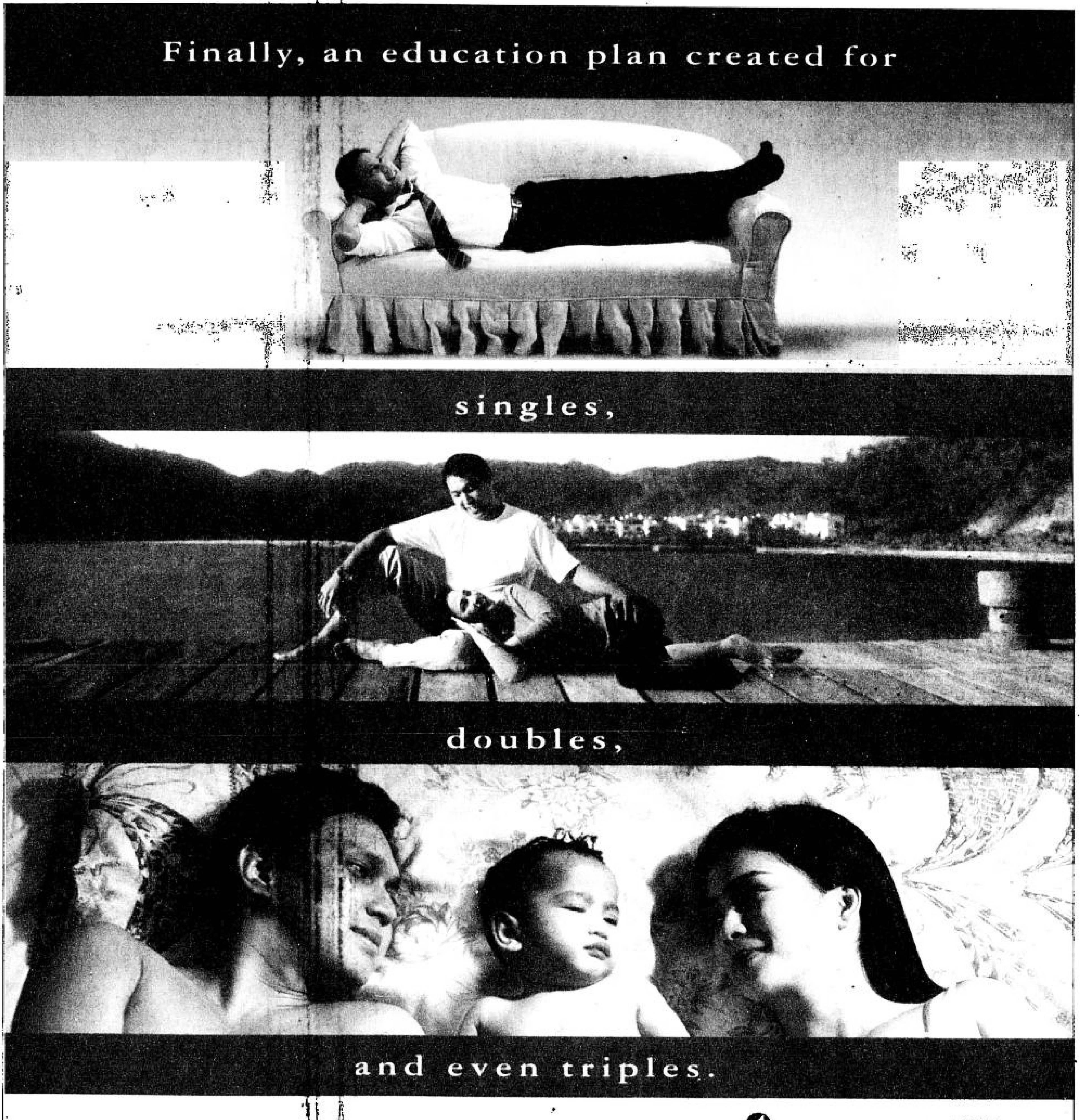
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Koizumi grabs lead in PM race

TOKYO—Chances of maverick reformist Junichiro Koizumi claiming Japan's premiership shot up on Sunday as he grabbed a runaway lead in his party's primary ballots.

The dramatic twist in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) leadership race stirred up speculation Koizumi's biggest rival and former premier Ryutaro Hashimoto may withdraw if the duel develops into a runoff.

"Koizumi to be elected as new party leader," declared the Asahi Shimbun paper as the 59-year-old former welfare minister won 42 LDP branch votes in a primary election.

"I did not think I could win this much and emerge as number one," Koizumi told a television program. "The simmering magma is coming to an explosion."

His early lead was out of the first 51 ballots cast by the 141 LDP local chapters, which gave just six votes to Hashimoto and three to Shizuka Kamei.

The staggering support for Koizumi dealt a severe blow to the 63-year-old Hashimoto, who was previously tipped as the front-runner.

Fourth contender Taro Aso, who is economic and fiscal policy minister, has still scored no points, losing to Koizumi even in his southern Japanese homeland of the Fukuoka chapter.

Voting in the other local chapters continues until Monday, but all major newspapers predicted Koizumi would further advance his lead, possibly snapping up more than 100 votes of the total 141.

The new LDP leader will be decided next Tuesday by votes from the party's lawmakers and the votes from its local chapters—three votes each from the party's 47 prefectural branches.

If no contender wins a majority, a runoff election will follow the first round of balloting.

While Koizumi enjoys a stranglehold in the local chapter votes, Hashimoto, who secures the largest grouping of 102-strong faction, is seen likely to dominate the parliamentary votes. *AFP*

Americas Summit okays 'democracy clause' as protesters, police clash anew

A NAKED protester taunts police using a water cannon during riots outside the Summit of the Americas in Quebec April 21. Police have used plenty of tear gas and rubber bullets to quell rioters outside the Summit. REUTERS

QUEBEC—Western hemisphere leaders ratified a plan Saturday barring undemocratic nations from the massive free trade zone they hope will expand prosperity across their 34 nations. For a second day, protesters clashed with nightstick-wielding police who fired water cannons and rubber bullets.

With the fence around the summit site ringed by rock-throwing protesters intent on tearing it down, presidents and prime ministers tried to address demonstrators' wildly varying grievances with the Summit of the Americas.

"We knew there were some people who wanted to come and stop us," Canadian Prime Minister Jean Chretien said. "But look what happened. We discussed democracy. We have a clause on democracy. We have discussed all the elements that are needed to help the 800 million people living in the Americas to prosper in the future."

Police said nearly 30,000 protesters crowded around the summit site, with 2,000 growing violent. In two days of unrest, at least 34 police officers were injured, as were 45 demonstrators. There were at least 150 arrests, police said.

US President George W. Bush signaled his willingness to accept environmental and labor standards in the trade pact, though advisers say he still opposes using trade sanctions to enforce the rules.

The so-called "democracy clause" would suspend the benefits of the free-trade zone from any country that ceases to be a democracy.

Cuba was the only nation in the Western Hemisphere excluded from the 34-nation summit, singled out because of its lack of free elections.

The clause gave the leaders an opportunity to draw attention from protests mounted a few blocks from their posh hotel room.

The leaders gathered in a conference room with two large-screen televisions, a gleaming horseshoe-shaped conference table and decorative, potted green ferns—a stark contrast to the scene outside, where police used tear gas, nightsticks and water cannons to wash protesters away from breaches in the security fence.

One by one, the leaders argued that expanded trade would buoy a variety of social causes.

Bush said democracies would take root. President Miguel Angel Rodriguez of Costa Rica said tiny economies like his would flourish.

Colombian President Andres Pastrana said his country would be better equipped to fight drug trafficking.

"Colombia, like all countries which have seen the seeds of the drug trade grow in its soil, needs the possibility of fair and open trade that will allow it to steer its economy in the right direction and confront the new imbalance caused by globalization," Pastrana said.

Several thousand protesters clashed with police, while about 20,000 others participated in two peaceful marches in this city of about 600,000. *AP*

Vietnam Reds choose new leader

HANOI—Vietnam's ruling Communist Party ended its national congress on Sunday, affirming free-market reforms and choosing a new, more moderate leader.

Nong Duc Manh, 60, the current head of the National Assembly, was appointed general secretary of the Communist Party, the country's most powerful position, officials said. The official announcement of Manh's selection was expected later Sunday.

The other two in the ruling troika—Prime Minister Phan Van Khai and President Tran Duc Luong—were expected to remain in their posts.

As Communist Vietnam struggles toward economic and social reforms, its image remains one held back by an elderly, conservative leadership.

That was symbolized by outgoing party boss Le Kha Phieu, 69, whose conservative political views and ineffective handling of Vietnam's struggling economy proved his downfall.

Signaling a concerted effort by the Communist Party to rejuvenate itself, Manh will be heading a younger party leadership.

"We will have younger blood in the leadership. Of course we need that," said Foreign Minister Nguyen Dy Nien.

Manh will be fighting an uphill battle to reverse the Communist Party's image. In recent years, the party's prestige has been tarnished by widespread corruption and red tape and a growing irrelevance to the younger generation.

A highly touted two-year campaign against corruption, launched by Phieu, is regarded as largely unsuccessful, with only a handful of senior officials singled out for reprimands.

In a sharply worded speech to the congress, Huu Tho, head of the Central Committee's Ideology and Cultural Commission, also warned of the dangers of increasing political opportunism within the party.

Tho cited factionalism, abuse of power for personal gain, and political paralysis as the growing symptoms of opportunism.

"If opportunism is allowed to develop, the nature of the party will be threatened and traditional cultural values will be shaken," Tho said.

Manh, who led the National Assembly for nine years, has a reputation as being a savvy politician who is effective in seeking consensus—a skill that could be put to good use since Vietnam remains divided on its political and economic path. *AP*

US-China ties face more trauma as Bush prepares to sign Taiwan arms deal

WASHINGTON—With a bitter spy plane row still simmering, the fragile relationship between the United States and China will absorb more trauma this week with President George W. Bush due to sign off on an arms package to Taiwan.

Taiwan's request for hi-tech radar systems, submarines and other weaponry as it faces a rising missile threat from China, prompted Beijing to launch a saber-rattling lobbying campaign, warning of catastrophic consequences of such a sale on Sino-US ties.

Since Bush took office in January, vowing a tough line towards Beijing, relations have seriously degenerated, culminating in the crisis sparked when a US EP-3 spy plane collided with a Chinese fighter jet on April 1.

The two sides have also exchanged harsh words on human rights, the detention of several US-based scholars in China and Bush's plans for a missile defense shield.

The US response to Taiwan's arms request looks set to make the situation worse.

According to a leak to the Taipei Times in March, Taiwan wants to buy four destroyers equipped with the hi-tech Aegis radar system.

It also is reported to have requested four older generation Kidd Class destroyers, submarine hunting planes, anti-radiation missiles, ship to ship missiles, and blockade-busting diesel submarines.

Most controversial is the Aegis system, which Beijing appears to fear could in future be used to extend a US-anti missile shield over Taiwan, which China considers a renegade province.

The White House has been tight-lipped about the US response to the arms sale request, with no announcement likely until a team of Taiwanese military officers visits Washington for talks in the next few days.

But there are growing signs that the Taiwanese team will be told that Washington is not yet ready to offer Aegis.

A Pentagon official said on condition of anonymity that there is "now a consensus on a recommendation" that would effectively defer the sale of the sophisticated missile tracking system this year.

But discussion is still under way in the administration on how to present the politically sensitive decision, said the official.

Pentagon officials have said that Taiwan's maintenance and training facilities may not yet be able to support a system as advanced as Aegis, and therefore Taiwan will have to be satisfied with four Kidd class destroyers.

But even if Aegis is not included, China is likely to respond angrily to any US arms package for Taiwan.

As if the issue was not controversial enough, Bush must make his decision with relations with Beijing still traumatized by the spy plane crisis.

The drama not only soured ties between Washington and Beijing but firmed hostility towards China in the United States, particularly in Congress. *AFP*

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28 killed in China mine blast

BEIJING—Exploding gas killed 48 miners in an illegal coal mine in central China, a mine official said Sunday.

Only four miners escaped Saturday's blast at the mine near Hancheng, a town in Shaanxi province, 750 km southwest of Beijing.

All others in the shaft perished, said an official at the Xiayukou mine who gave only his surname, Zhang. The bodies of the 48 dead have been recovered, he said.

Zhang and an official at the coal mine bureau in Hancheng said the miners must have struck a pocket of trapped flammable gas while digging, though the details were still unclear.

The bureau official, who refused to give his name, said the mine operated without a permit.

There are hundreds of illegal mines in China. Most operate without even rudimentary safety measures or proper ventilation that would allow deadly gases to escape. The miners are often impoverished farmers who lack proper training.

Such renegade operations help make China's coal mines the deadliest in the world. More than 4,800 miners died last year, many in explosions.

China has launched a crackdown on illegal mines and ordered routine safety inspections and proper training for miners, but the rules appear to be only spottily enforced. *AP*

Across the NATION

TONY BERGONIA, Assistant Editor

Coconut farming abandoned

BAGUIO CITY—Due to the falling prices of copra, millions of coconut farmers in the country have stopped tilling the crop.

"Millions of coconut farmers like me have stopped producing copra. We would be crazy if we produce copra," said Guillermo Palomera, vice president of the Pambansang Koalisyon ng mga Samahang magsasaka at Manggagawa sa Niyugan (Peksman).

Two years ago, coconut farmers earned only about P10,000 each a year when copra prices ranged between P17 and P18 a kilo, Palomera said.

"That means (a farmer) has to feed his family of six with his earnings of P25 a day," he said. "Today, copra is about P2.75 to P3.25 a kilo. That would mean a coconut farmer would be earning P2,000 a year."

Palomera and representatives of small coconut farmers picketed the Supreme Court compound here on April 17 while the justices heard the oral arguments on the ownership of the controversial coconut levy funds.

Of the 3.4 million Filipinos involved in the coconut industry, 90 percent are small coconut farmers and workers.

"Add their dependents and you have 20 million restless *magniniyog* (coconut workers)," Palomera said.

Resorting to planting other crops would be difficult for these workers, he added.

According to the Coconut Industry Reform Movement (Coir), 2.1 million of the more than 3 million hectares planted with coconut are not intercropped. This means that coconut production is the only livelihood these workers depend on.

The Department of Agriculture estimates that for 2001, coconut production would reach only 1.35 metric tons per hectare or almost half of the 2.4 metric tons output last year.

Average productivity has gone down to 38 to 40 nuts per tree, far below the ideal 75 nuts per tree.

Former Quezon Rep. Oscar Santos, a former official of the Philippine Coconut Authority, blamed government inaction for the plight of coconut farmers.

"In my analysis of the presidential decrees regarding the coconut levy, I never saw one provision that states that the coco levy collected from the *magniniyog* should be given to just one or chosen few," said Santos. "It has been stated that coconut levy funds are for the *magniniyog*."

He added: "The United Coconut Planters Bank was built to provide a permanent solution to the perennial credit problem of the coconut farmers. But is UCPB really for the *magniniyog*? Why are the ones sitting there (as board of directors) not the *magniniyog*? Why are those sitting there those who have no connection whatsoever to the coconut industry?" *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

De Oro barricade set up to block logging trucks

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Hundreds of farmers and fishermen yesterday barricaded a major highway linking Lanao del Sur to this city, in a bid to stop indiscriminate logging in the Lanao watershed.

The barricade, spearheaded by Task Force Macajalar, coincided with yesterday's celebration of Earth Day.

Orlando Ravanera, chair of Task Force Macajalar, said they plan to remain in the barricades for at least a week to prevent logging trucks from reaching this city where lumber would be sold.

He said loggers usually travel at night using the Talakag-Cagayan de Oro Highway to avoid the prying eyes of residents who have long been incensed by the indiscriminate logging in the Lanao watershed.

"This (logging) poses a threat to our lives. This is no longer just the idea of trees being cut," said Fr. Lenny Sumpaco, parish priest of Barangay Lumbia here.

Sumpaco said eroded soil from the watershed has swollen the rivers of Cagayan de Oro, threatening the livelihood of hundreds of fishers.

He appealed to Environment Secretary Heherson Alvarez to order a stop to logging in the Lanao watershed that straddles Bukidnon, Lanao del Sur and Cagayan de Oro.

Two months ago, Task Force Macajalar claimed to have discovered that environment officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao approved the cutting of 20,000 cubic meters of logs for delivery to Cagayan de Oro.

Task Force Macajalar and the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro vowed to stop the transport of logs to the city.

Some 500 farmers and fishers marched around the city yesterday, demanding a stop to logging. They later proceeded to Barangay Lumbia where they set up a barricade of old tires, vehicles and stones.

The indiscriminate logging in the Lanao watershed has been a contentious issue among ARMM officials, some of whom insist the watershed is not "over logged." *Froilan Gallardo, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Visayas and Mindanao including Palawan will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

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Compiled by: Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

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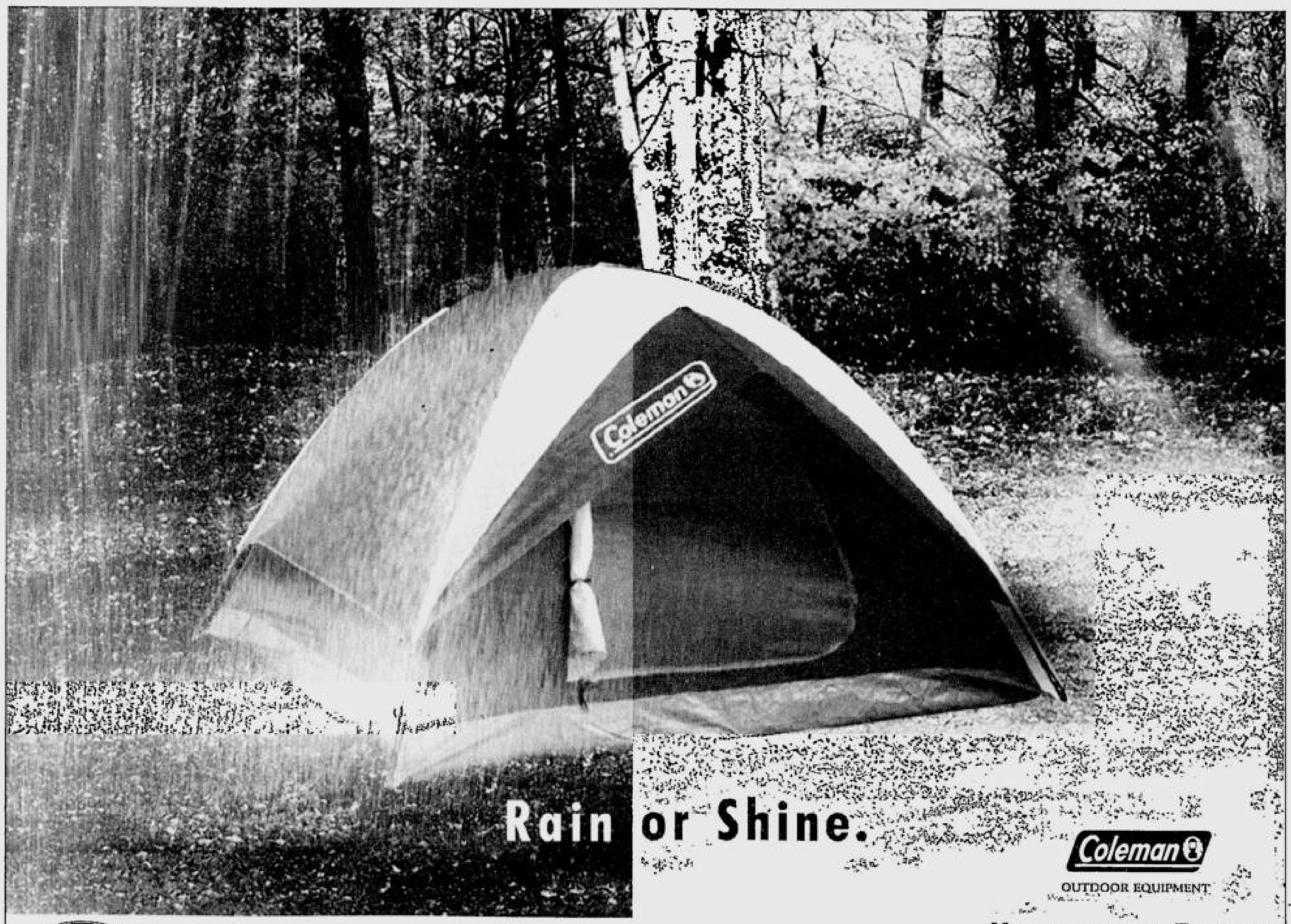

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KILLINGS CONTINUE

Ilocos mayor's escort slain

NARVACAN, Ilocos Sur—After the murder of Santa Lucia Mayor Teodoro Hernaez and his three police escorts on Wednesday night, a policeman-escort of the mayor here and his attacker were killed in a shootout in this town Thursday night.

Police identified the victims as SPO2 Leoncio Cabuena Jr., 51, and Maximo Dar, 32, of Barangay Danuman East in Santa Maria town.

Reports here said Cabuena was an escort of Mayor Charito Zaragoza.

Chief Insp. Romeo Magsalos, Narvacan police director, ruled out politics in the shootout, saying the incident was motivated by an old grudge between Cabuena and Dar.

Investigation showed that Dar, armed with an M-16 Armalite rifle, went to Barangay Rivadavia here looking for the policeman.

When Cabuena arrived, Dar approached him and shot him several times.

Before he fell, Cabuena was able to draw his .45 cal. service pistol and hit Dar in the left thigh. Cabuena died from bullet wounds in the face.

Dar fled and hid in an abandoned house some 100 meters from the crime scene.

Responding policemen traced Dar through bloodstains in his escape route but found him already dead in the house. His Armalite rifle was recovered near his body.

The killings came as the widow of slain reelectionist Mayor Teodoro Hernaez sought the help of President Macapagal-Arroyo for the speedy investigation of her husband's murder by unknown assassins last Thursday night in Barangay Namatican.

Mrs. Estrella Hernaez, widow of the slain Sta. Lucia mayor, expressed deep concern over persistent reports that police investigators are focusing their investigation on the involvement of local rebels in the mayor's killing and three others.

Mrs. Hernaez said they don't believe that the NPA was responsible because the mayor was "well-loved by his constituents and had been elected overwhelmingly by his townmates in the last two elections."

The mayor's family believe that the police should look deeply into the investigation and expressed hope that the reported video recording of the affair allegedly obtained by the police regional command will shed further light into the killing.

Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson has reportedly increased to P500,000 the reward offer for any information leading to the arrest of the mayor's killers.

Dr. Ferdinand Hernaez, son of the slain mayor, insists that the murder was politically motivated and that they are seeking the President's help to bring the perpetrators to justice.

"While we are not accusing any specific person… we hope that this act will not turn into another Bubby Dacer (case) where the real masterminds remain scot-free," Hernaez said.

Mayor Hernaez and three of his security escorts were killed during Barangay Namatican's fiesta celebration. *Leoncio Balbin Jr., PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Rub-out signs prompt probe of 'shootout'

CEBU CITY—Chief Supt. Avelino Razon Jr., police director for Central Visayas, ordered the creation of a five-man committee to look into the killing of a suspected robber on April 19, which bore signs of a rubout.

He said the committee would determine if Antonio Arcillas, 25, a native of Davao City, was killed in a shootout with police or a rubout.

"There are talks that it was a rubout. But we have to verify this. We have to look into facts because anybody could just speculate," said Razon.

He said all Special Operations Team (SOT) members, who participated in the operation, would undergo a paraffin test to determine who fired at the suspect.

Razon also called for a reenactment of the shooting so the committee could study the suspect's position, the entry and exit wounds made by the bullets and the distance of the policemen from Arcillas when the shooting happened.

"We also have to look at what necessitated the shooting," he added. "However, I assure the public my men will face stern disciplinary action if… they violated the law."

Among those who allegedly joined the operation were Insp. Wenceslao Arreola, SOT head, and his members—SPO3 Roy Codiñera and SPO4 Ben Diloy.

Arcillas died from five bullet wounds in the back and one in the back of the head after he allegedly tried to shoot at SOT members after he was cornered along Archbishop Reyes Avenue, Barangay Banilad this city.

Codiñera said they were forced to open fire after Arcillas allegedly drew and aimed his .45 cal. pistol at them. But the pistol jammed, he said.

"He still aimed his gun at us even after we introduced ourselves as policemen. We couldn't just let him hit us first," he said in Cebuano.

He, however, could not explain why all the gunshot wounds were at the back of the victim's body.

Codiñera said Arcillas belonged to a robbery group that arrived from Mindanao on April 17.

But Imelda Laude, 31, the victim's common-law wife, said Arcillas was a shoplifter, not a robber.

She said she and Arcillas arrived from Davao City on April 19, a day before his death, because he wanted to look for a job in Cebu City.

Codiñera said intelligence information said Arcillas' group planned to rob a bank branch on April 19 but later decided to target moneychangers instead.

Last Thursday, Codiñera said the same police asset told them that the group would rob a moneychanger in uptown Cebu.

"When we arrived at the area we saw four men already posted near the moneychanger's office. Two motorcycles were ready for their escape," he said.

But, he added, the group aborted the plan because of the policemen patrolling the area.

The SOT members tailed the suspects who were on board two motorcycles until they reached Barangay Banilad.

Arcillas, who was the back rider in the motorcycle, got off and walked toward the Tian Sian Temple.

Codiñera said they also got off their vehicles and introduced themselves as policemen. But Arcillas allegedly drew a gun. *Tonton A. Antogop and Fritzie Joy Dunggog, PDI Visayas Bureau*

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Bets fear early cheating in Basilan

ISABELA, Basilan—Some candidates in this province's first district questioned the early distribution of 145 ballot boxes in Lamitan town by the provincial treasurer's office.

Reelectionist Rep. Gerry Salapuddin expressed alarm over the incident, saying it could open the floodgates for fraud in the May 14.

"We have to be vigilant about these things and we must not allow unscrupulous individuals or groups to steal the mandate of the people," Salapuddin.

On April 10, assistant provincial treasurer Camen Casipe released 145 ballot boxes to the municipal treasurer's office of Lamitan.

Provincial election officer Darryl Kinazo allegedly did not authorize the transfer of the ballot boxes.

Salapuddin urged Kinazo to investigate the incident.

During Thursday's candidates' forum at the Isabela gymnasium, candidates from different political affiliations in the province's seven towns expressed similar apprehensions.

"We want to know how and why how this incident happened. Could this already be part of a grand idea to cheat in next month's elections?" Salapuddin asked.

Kinazo said his office is still gathering evidence on the release of the ballot boxes and gave assurances that he would not tolerated fraud. *Jonathan F. Ma, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Party list still gray area for most voters

BY ALEX PAL
PDI Visayas Bureau

DUMAGUETE CITY—This might be one case for the books: There's one congressman here seeking reelection by telling voters "Don't vote for me!"

It may sound like an odd way to campaign, but for Dan Roleda, a partylist representative in the House, it may just do the trick.

Roleda complained that voters have not been made aware of the partylist system and this makes the campaign for partylist groups extra difficult.

Many voters don't know that under the partylist system, one doesn't vote for a person but for a group.

Roleda said although his partylist group, Alab, won in the last elections, he still has to do a lot of explaining when talking to voters about the partylist system.

"A voter has to vote for one local district representative, plus one nationwide sectoral group—not the candidate's name—for the party-list," Roleda said, recalling what he had been repeating to voters during the campaign.

Roleda is campaigning not only in his home province of Samar, but also in other parts of the country, including Negros Oriental.

"Voters are still not completely aware of the 1987 provision which provides for 52 sectoral representatives in Congress, apart from the 208 district representatives," Roleda said.

A party-list organization, like Alab, which means Ang Lakas ng Bagong Kooperatiba, gets three seats in Congress if it gets six percent of all votes cast for the party-list system.

Roleda said his party's priorities are primary education, primary health care, and a decent livelihood for the head for the family.

Among the concerns that Alab has noted is the absence of a law requiring 4-year-olds to attend kindergarten for free.

"Making them go to school at age 6 is too late," he said, adding that the government's day-care program cannot be a substitute for free kindergarten.

He said the Alab proposal is doable since the Department of Education, Culture and Sports is "ready but there's just no policy requiring (a free) kindergarten (program)."

The institutionalization of free health care for all infants and children up to 10 years old is also one of Alab's priorities. "The government programs that we have right now are *pausu-uso lang*," he said.

Roleda said health care programs should be carried out on a monthly basis. He recalled that while he was councilor for the 4th district of Manila for six years until 1998, he had learned from the Indonesian experience where even children from poor coastal villages can benefit from such health programs.

The Philippines, he said, can duplicate such programs.

Marcoses back 'pinakbet' coalition in Senate race

BY CRISTINA ARZADON AND KIRA ESPINO
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

LAOAG CITY—Taking a turn from their earlier pronouncements of a Lakas-KBL alliance, the Marcoses have included senatorial candidates from the opposition Puwersa ng Masa as among those they will support in a "special *pinakbet*" ticket.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., a Kilusang Bagong Lipunan stalwart, described the lineup of senators they will endorse as a "special *pinakbet*" coalition.

Pinakbet is the famous Ilocano dish, which is a mix and match of a variety of garden vegetables.

In a press briefing recently, Marcos announced his support for reelectionist Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago, Juan Ponce Enrile, Ramon Magsaysay Jr. and Juan Flavier.

He also endorsed former Philippine National Police chief Panfilo Lacson.

Marcos also denied reports that they had supported Puwersa ng Masa candidates when the group held its campaign sortie here earlier this month.

"When did we endorse the Puwersa ng Masa? When? When did I say vote for this (candidate)? When? You are assuming facts that are not in (the set of) evidence, as the impeachment trial would have said," Marcos said.

But he said endorsing candidates from the PnM did not mean a breakup in the Lakas-KBL coalition.

Earlier, the Marcos-led KBL had coalesced with the ruling Lakas-NUCD. The Marcoses, however, also attended the proclamation rally of the senatorial candidates of PnM here last week.

The governor also downplayed their presence during the PnM rally, which was attended by ousted President Joseph Estrada, saying that they entertained him out of "common courtesy" since he was "a former president, a personal friend and friend of the province."

"That is called common courtesy. Nothing more. No political significance; no big meaning; no breaking of the coalition (with Lakas). None of these self-important meanings that we try to read into everything," he said.

He said since Estrada had helped them, it was "common courtesy to return the favor."

"We may have sinned but being disloyal and turncoats are not among our sins," he added.

More poll hot spots tagged

BY CARLA P. GOMEZ AND CHITO A. FUENTES
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—The Philippine National Police is monitoring 125 barangays in Negros Occidental and 11 towns in Bohol that have been classified as election areas of concern.

The police classified two of the 125 villages in 23 towns and cities in Negros Occidental as "immediate areas of concern" while the rest were just "areas of concern."

A barangay, town or city is considered immediate areas of concern if there are rebels in the area or rivals are likely to kill each other and if the area saw election-related violence in the past.

If only one or two elements are existing, an "area of concern" is declared.

Identified as "immediate areas of concern" were Barangays Villacin and VF Gustilo in Cadiz City, about 65 kilometers south of the capital Bacolod City.

The 123 villages tagged as areas of concern were in the towns of Toboso, E.B. Magalona, Calatrava, Murcia, Salvador Benedicto, Binalbagan, Isabela, Moises Padilla, San Enrique, Candoni, Cauayan, Ilog, La Castellana, Hinigaran.

The others were in the cities of Victorias, Cadiz, Sagay, San Carlos, Silay, La Carlota, Escalante, Sipalay and Kabankalan.

In Bohol, nine of the 11 towns were identified as areas of concern because of the presence of New People's Army rebels.

Supt. Lani-o Nerez, Bohol police chief, identified them as the municipalities of Sagbayan, Buenavista, Danao, Mabini, Catigbian, Sevilla, Batuan, Bilar and Inabanga.

The towns of Dauis, Batuan, Buenavista, Sagbayan and Calape were also being monitored because of past election-related violence.

So far, Nerez said Bohol has been peaceful. "We have given instructions (to) our men to be always on the alert but so far it has been generally peaceful," he said.

Herrera urges review of SSS, GSIS charters

BACOLOD CITY—Senatorial candidate Ernesto Herrera urged a review of the charters of the Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance Service to prevent the use of the pension agencies' funds for purposes other than their members' benefits.

"No person, not even the President of the Philippines, should be allowed to touch the SSS and GSIS funds," he said.

Herrera said the "worst crime" committed by deposed President Joseph Estrada was his having "practically plundered the SSS and GSIS funds."

He said under the Estrada administration, the SSS lost P8 billion and the GSIS, P3.3 billion due to bad investments in companies owned by his cronies.

"That is the worst crime he committed against the people who are ordinary workers of the government and of the private sector," he said.

In Dumaguete City, Sen. Ramon Magsaysay Jr. said that if he were to be reelected, he would file a bill that would isolate the SSS and the GSIS from political maneuverings.

Magsaysay, a PPC candidate, said he wants the appointment of SSS and GSIS officials to be more stringent to ensure that the appointees are competent and would not bow down to political maneuverings from the powers-that-be.

He said there should be a law that would ensure the independence of SSS and GSIS officials.

Estrada is facing charges for allegedly ordering top officials of the SSS and GSIS to invest in a company that is owned by his cronies.

Carlos Arellano, a childhood buddy of Estrada and former head of the SSS, and Federico Pascual, head of the GSIS, made the accusation in depositions that they gave government prosecutors.

The ousted President was also accused of earning hundreds of millions of pesos in kickbacks from the sale of shares in the Belle Resources.

The ousted president faces plunder charges for the billions of pesos in losses that the two pension agencies incurred after they invested in Belle.

The former president was also accused of laundering billions of pesos in stolen wealth in several banks.

Anger over Estrada's alleged thievery led to his ouster in a People Power 2 movement that is now being used by candidates of the People Power Coalition to woo votes. *Carla P. Gomez and Romy G. Amarado, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Rallies on Cordillera Day

BAGUIO CITY—Aside from playing host to this year's celebration of Cordillera Day from April 23-25, the mining town of Mankayan in Benguet will be the venue of rallies of political parties.

Organizers of Cordillera Day, which also commemorates the heroism and death of Chico Dam opponent Macli-ing Dulag, said they expect 3,000 local and foreign delegates to troop to Mankayan next week.

Desiree Caluza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

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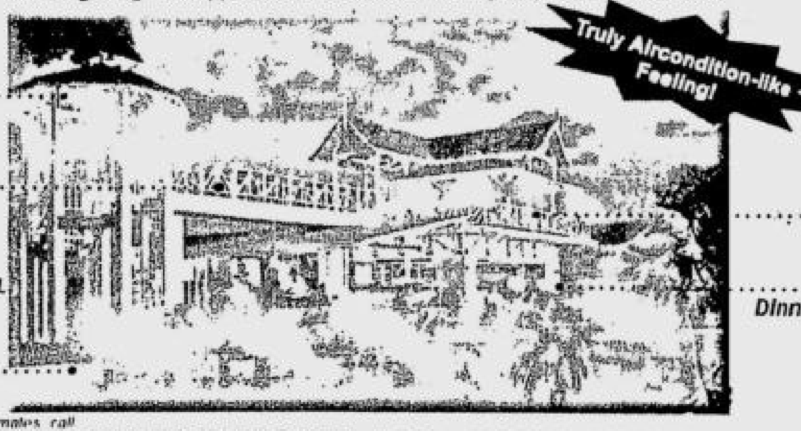
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ROUNDUP

NPAs own killing

TAGBILARAN CITY—The New People's Army claimed responsibility for the March 25 killing of a village chief in Anda town. Silvino Clamucha, National Democratic Front Central Visayas spokesperson, told radio station dyTR here that Rodrigo Jandayan, barangay captain of Tanod, was killed for crimes against the movement. Clamucha claimed that Jandayan spied on the rebels for the military. Jandayan was also accused of harassing farmers and rebel supporters.

Chito A. Fuentes, PDI Visayas Bureau

9 rebels charged

ROXAS CITY—Illegal possession charges were filed against nine suspected members of the New People's Army, including a minor, who were captured during a raid on their camp in Dumarao town, 50 kilometers from here. The suspects were also charged with violation of the gun ban after they were caught possessing seven 12-gauge shotguns, two .38 caliber pistols and ammunition for a shotgun during a raid on their lair on April 18 in Mt. Tag-ao in Sitio Agcawan, Barangay Bungsu-an.

Gerry T. Pagharion, PDI Visayas Bureau

Polls delay projects

DIGOS CITY—The May 14 elections has delayed the implementation of livelihood projects intended for indigenous communities in Davao del Sur. Susan Abawag, coordinator of the National Council for Indigenous Peoples, said some P700,000 worth of livelihood programs have to be delayed because of a Commission on Elections ban on projects during the election period.

Allan A. Nawal, PDI Mindanao Bureau

309 held for 'jueteng'

CABANATUAN CITY—The Nueva Ecija police arrested 309 suspects in jueteng operations in the province since January this year. Senior Supt. Raul Bacalzo, acting Nueva Ecija police director, said 53 of those arrested who were involved in actual jueteng draws and have been charged in court. Police seized P265,428.50 in bets from the suspects, Bacalzo said. Jueteng draws are reportedly being held in 12 towns and two cities in the province.

Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk

NPA tagged in slaying try

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Police officials in Pampanga on Monday tagged the New People's Army as the group behind the ambush attempt on a mayoral candidate and the wounding of an Aeta leader in Porac town on April 7. Senior Supt. Ismael Rafanan, Pampanga police director, said a certain Ka Naldo led the suspected NPA rebels who fired at the car of candidate Renato Payumo and his three supporters in Barangay Camias, a mountainous village in Porac. Payumo and his three companions were unhurt in the ambush, Rafanan said.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

New Ilocos PNP chief

SAN FERNANDO CITY—Senior Supt. Arturo Lomibao has assumed his new post as Ilocos director of the Philippine National Police. He replaced Chief Supt. Jose Ayap. Before his posting here, Lomibao was regional director of the Cordillera and Central Luzon police commands.

Gia Damaso-Dumo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

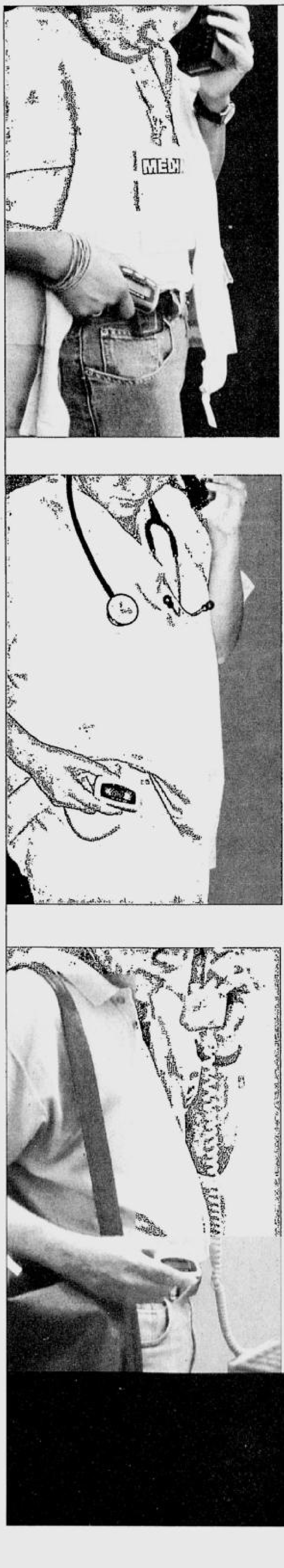
Boniol, 88

ANDRES Notario Boniol of San Juan, Metro Manila, died Saturday at the age of 88. His children—Juliet and Bobby Reyes; INQUIRER deskperson Leti; Estela and Robert Malabanan; Mario and Susan; Emy and Emer Marcos; Lucy and Joe Pontacana; Andres Jr. and Rey and Jean; and sisters Hermilina and Marcelina; granchildren, nephews and nieces, request readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul. His remains lie at the Arlington Memorial Chapel along Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Interment will be at the Eternal Gardens in Caloocan City at 9 a.m. Wednesday, April 25.

New Bicol PNP chief

LEGAZPI CITY—Chief Supt. Robert C. Delfin has taken over as regional director of the Philippine National Police in Bicol from Chief Supt. Marcelo E. Navarro Jr. In a ceremony at Camp Gen. Simeon A. Ola here, Delfin vowed to continue to implement the projects of his predecessor and enforce the new policies of the Macapagal administration. Navarro was transferred to the office of the PNP chief. During his term in Bicol, he transformed Camp Gen. Simeon A. Ola into a heritage camp called the Kampo ng Bayan, which showcased the rich tradition and cultural heritage of the Bicol region.

Rey Nasol, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau



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Hon. Jose D. Lina, Jr.
Guest Speaker
Commencement Exercises

Today, 23 April 2001, President Orlando B. Molina leads Trinity College of Quezon City, on the eve of its 40th anniversary of excellence in serving and learning, and on its dynamic journey towards universityhood, in presenting to the nation and the professional world 1,337 graduates of its Graduate School and Colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, Medical Technology, and Nursing, true to its educational philosophy of "preparing the youth for life through God-centered service and education."

The Baccalaureate Service and the Commencement Exercises will both be held at the Plenary Hall of the Philippine International Convention Center (PICC) on Roxas Boulevard in Pasay City. The Baccalaureate Service starts at 7 30 am and is led by Rev Fr Fernando Boyagan, College Chaplain, with Atty Francisco "Kiko" Pangilinan, senatorial candidate from the People Power Coalition, as speaker. The Commencement Exercises will start at 9 00 am and will have Secretary Jose D. Lina, Jr. of the Department of the Interior and Local Government as guest speaker. The Board of Visitors is composed of Mr Allan Lai and Mr. David Wong of Philcast Technologies, and Ms Grace T. Vilonco, philantropist and socio-civic leader.

The committee for this year's commencement exercises is headed by Dr. Josefina S. Sumaya, Dean of the Graduate School and Officer-in-Charge of the College of Arts and Sciences

Graduating at the top of Batch 2001 are Jesus Briones, Jr., BS Hotel and Restaurant Management, magna cum laude, and Kyi-Jin Shin, BS Tourism, magna cum laude. The cum laude graduates are Imelda T. Quen, Maria Aileen Afunggol, Catherine Ivy Reyes and Jhosanna L. Santos, all BS Psychology, Melvin Penuliar, B.S. Education, Chito B. Pascual and Mariane G. Flores, BS Nursing.

The breakdown of graduates is as follows:

Graduate School: Master in Education - 9, Master in Business Administration - 10, Master in Management - 65, Master in Public Administration - 21, and Master in Nursing - 1, College of Arts and Sciences. BS Biology - 7, BS Psychology - 36, AB Mass Communication - 39, AB English - 9, AB Filipino - 1, BS Mathematics - 1, AB Political Science - 8, College of Business Administration. BS Computer Science - 74, BS Hotel and Restaurant Management - 103, BS Business Administration - 85, BS Tourism - 9, BS Public Administration - 278, College of Medical Technology. BS Medical Technology - 51, St. Luke's College of Nursing. BS Nursing - 19, BS Community Health - 492.

Last March, the Trinity Learning Center for Children (TLCC) moved up 31 children from its nursery, kindergarden and preparatory levels. The Constancy Award was presented to John Rey C. Bernal, Luigi Ballegi Q. Bondoc, Mary Angeline U. Daguimol, Patricia Bianca A. Del Rosario, Clarice A. Delos Santos, Leslie Ann Pastrana, and Nathaniel John D. Janagap.

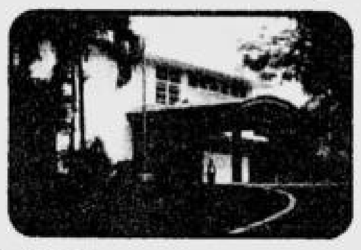
The Elementary School had 158 childern from its Rizal, Balagtas, Mabini and Aguinaldo classes. The honor pupils were Jayson A. Catuva - first honor, Jeffrey P. Del Rosario - second honor, Alpha Louie E. Rocero - first honorable mention, Samuel Anthony D. Oberes - second honorable mention, Ralph F. Tan Sanchez - third honorable mention, and Russell D. Ricarte, Faith A. Manuel, Carlo Cezar S. Sta. Ana, Tom Camero M. Dumantay, and Kayleen Mae A. Ortiz, with honors. Outstanding pupils from sections were Maria Francesca Domenica T. Estrada - Mabini, Aloisa Mae S. Calicdan - Balagtas, and Rowena G. Calisie - Aguinaldo

The High School had 224 graduates from its Amethyst, Garnet, Pearl, Ruby, Sapphire and Topaz classes. The honor graduates were Ricky A. Sabornay - valedictorian, Kathleen W. Dacera - salutatorian, Rene Jesus Alfredo R. Dinglasan - first honorable mention, Rodin Paul R. Sandrino - second honorable mention, Divina Gracia A. Anies - third honorable mention, Reina G. Orfinada - foruth honorable mention and Maria Isabel A. Doma - fifth honorable mention. Outstanding students from sections were Diana R. Pablico - Amethyst, Maria Socorro E. Agitan - Garnet, Edgar M. Salem Jr. - Ruby, Catherine C. Bariolay - Sapphire, and William Christopher L. Apita - Topaz. Recipients of special awards were Ricky A. Sabornay - Jose P. Laurel Award and A.Y. Foundation Award, and Rodin Paul R. Sandrino - Arthur Carson Leadership Award and Gloria Macapagal Arroyo Leadership Award.

Schoolyear 2000-2001 for Trinity College of Quezon City was highlighted by a review of the College vision, mission and goals, formulation of its 5-year development plan, groundbreaking for the four-storey Medical Technology and Nursing building and the three-storey Technology, Sciences and Administration building, the Chairman and President's Convocations, and the 38th Foundation Anniversary celebration made highly memorable by the meaningful participation of students, faculty, staff, administration and alumni, and continuous program and curriculum development for quality and affordable education that leads students to respond to the challenges of the 21st century yet hurl challenges to the times as well. Its St. Luke's College of Nursing is envisioned to be the Center of Excellence in Nursing education in the Philippines.

On the eve of its 40th Anniversary and onto the new millennium, TCQC strengthens its resolve to become a university in the near future. It has been at the forefront in the task of building the personalities of the country's future parents and leaders. With its mission to develop the youth to become persons for others, it has spread around the country and the globe professionals who now help shape the lives of people and set directions for the future. That is why it wants to be a university, so it can achieve much more. Proud of its mission to provide quality Christian education to a broad sector of the masses, it is further inspired by this journey in this age of information technology while highly conscious of its noble role to instill among its students the prime values of service to God and country

Brief History



Trinity College is an educational institution launched by 160 shares of Proctor and Gamble stock. It all started when Paul Matthews, who became Episcopal Bishop of New Jersey, USA in 1951, married Elsie Proctor whose grandfather founded Procter and Gamble Company. Both the Matthews and Gamble families were greatly interested in the missionary work of the Episcopal Church. In 1922, Ms Mortimer Matthews gave to the Rt. Rev. Gouverneur Mosher, then Bishop of the Philippines, 60 shares of Procter and Gamble stock, and Bishop Matthews added 100 shares the following year. Valued then at $ 25,000.00, these gifts went to a Trust Fund to be spent in any way the Bishop of the Philippines considered most helpful to the work of the Church. In 1961, the stock had increased to 867 shares valued at $ 491,361.82. The Rt. Lyman C. Ogilby, then Bishop of the Philippine Episcopal Church felt the money would be best spent to set up a Christian College of high standards. The fund was then used to purchase the former Capitol City Colleges from the P.E. Domingo family in 1963.

Its first three presidents were Dr. Arthur L. Carson, a missionary educator connected with several Christian universities in China and former head of the Silliman University in the Philippines, Dr. Arturo M. Guerrero, former registrar of the University of the Philippines, and Dr. Rafael B. Rodriguez, former head of the Biology Department of the College and a microbiologist at the UERM Medical Center. The fourth and incumbent president is Dr. Orlando B. Molina, former president of the Caloocan City Polytechnic College and incumbent president of the Association of Local Colleges and Universities

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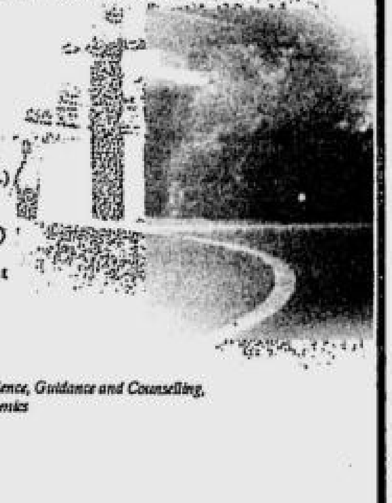
- Master in Public Administration (M.P.A.)



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39th Commencement Exercises

THE BEST OF BATCH 2001

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B.S. Hotel and Restaurant Management
Magna Cum Laude

Kyl-Jin Shin
B.S. Tourism
Magna Cum Laude

Imelda Quen
B.S. Psychology
Cum Laude

Maria Aileen Afunggol
B.S. Psychology
Cum Laude

Catherine Ivy Reyes
B.S. Psychology
Cum Laude

Jhosanna Santos
B.S. Psychology
Cum Laude

Melvin Penuliar
B.S. Education
Cum Laude

Chito Pascual
B.S. Nursing
Cum Laude

Mariane Flores
B.S. Nursing
Cum Laude

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"The shining future beckons us and it is ours for the taking" - O.B. Molina

MESSAGES

In behalf of the clergy and people of the historic Iglesia Filipina Independiente, I warmly congratulate in the Name of Jesus, the Risen Lord all graduates and parents of our own Trinity College of Quezon City for their success. May your success find challenge and reward as we steadfastly journey together in this Great Jubilee Year in seeking peace based on justice and pursuing it.

I also would like to express my appreciation to the administration, faculty and staff for their continuing patience for bearing with us to ensure the life, faith and mission of Trinity College that it can be an instrument of peace. We also kindly call on our parents to continue trusting students at Trinity because the school maintains its very good service to produce the creams of society. God bless you all. With every best wish, we remain PARA SA DIYOS AT BAYAN,

The Most Rev. Tomas A. Millamena
Supreme Bishop, Iglesia Filipina Independiente

CONGRATULATIONS! We are praying for all of you as you take your place in society as useful and productive citizens of our country. We are proud of you. Our country needs you. Aspire to make the difference. God bless you all

The Most Rev. Ignacio Soliba
Prime Bishop, The Episcopal Church in the Philippines

Today is your graduation day and more than just being emancipated from the horrors of school exams, you are being released to face a world of problems as well as opportunities. In many instances, you will be challenged to transform your problems into opportunities. I believe that Trinity College of Quezon City has prepared you well by molding you into persons for others. I pray that as you venture into the future, into a world of complexities, you will gird up against Satan's subtle snares. You will be naturally driven to look for good paying jobs, or lucrative positions in commerce or government but there is always the possibility of ending up jobless for these are not easy times. But don't lose heart. As Schumacher would say, tough times never last, only tough people do." I may also add that there are more important things in life than a good job or a stable income. Ultimately it is not what you get that counts but how much you give of yourselves.

The world offers unlimited opportunities for service. Go out then serve our people. There are noble causes bigger than yourselves. It is in transcending yourselves that you will discover your greatest fulfillment. Finally, congratulations. You have reached this far because you dared to struggle, you dared to win.

Frank I.O. Longid
Chairperson, Board of Trustees

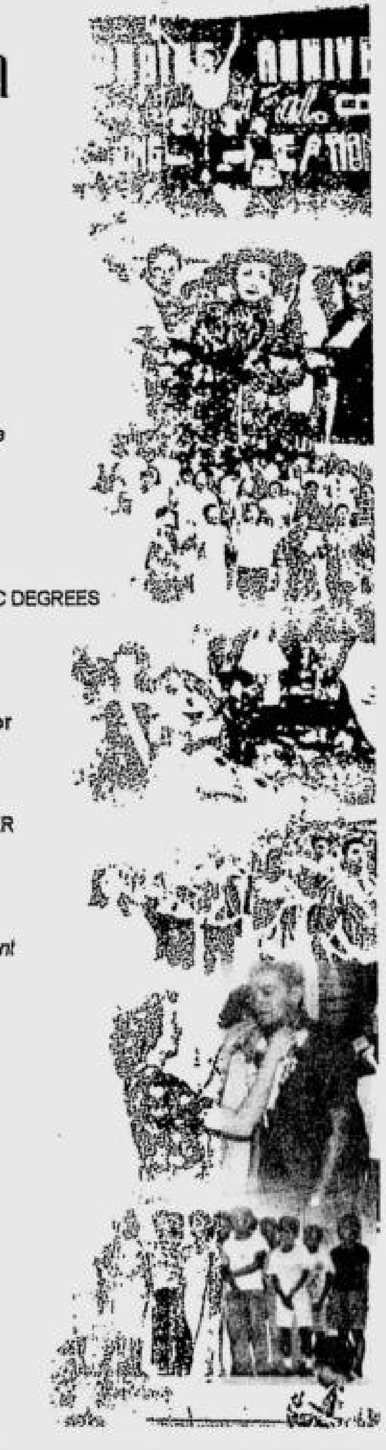
I offer my warmest felicitations to the graduates of Batch 2001 of the Trinity College of Quezon City. You have certainly done your Alma Mater proud. Your graduations comes at a unique time in our nation's history. Basking in the euphoria engendered by People Power II and gripped by feverish preparations for the May elections, your commencement exercises could not have chosen a more fitting background.

The graduate today faces an array of choices that impact on his future. Given the hardships posed by a globally-challenged economy, a Trinitian is expected to rise to the occasion as he comes prepared to face life through God-centered service and education. It is the kind of education that produces what Professor Art Harkins calls the "knowledge workers", for their personal innovations create social, economic, and professional change. It behooves each one of you therefore to be sensitive and at the same time empowered to respond to the paradigm shifts in our environment. The shining future beckons us and it is ours for the taking. Once again, congratulations and MABUHAY!

Orlando B. Molina
President

Commencement Program

Monday, 23 April 2001 9 00 A.M.
Plenary Hall
Philippine International Convention Center



I
ENTRANCE OF COLORS
Cadet Girl Scout Troup #3

II
PHILIPPINE NATIONAL ANTHEM

III
ADDRESS OF PETITION
Jesus S. Briones, Jr.
Candidate for Bachelor of Science Major in Hotel and Restaurant Management, Magna Cum Laude

IV
RESPONSE TO THE PETITION
Dr. Orlando B. Molina
President, Trinity College of Quezon City

V
IMPOSITION OF HOODS ON THE CANDIDATES FOR ACADEMIC DEGREES
by the **Parents of the Candidates**

VI
PRESENTATION OF ACADEMIC DEGREES, HONORS AND LOYALTY AWARDS
Dr. Orlando B. Molina and Ms Iluminada F. Castigador
Atty. Roberto B. Lugue and Dr. Cindy Dollente Ang
Mr. Frank I.O. Longid and Dr. Orlando B. Molina

VII
INTRODUCTION OF THE COMMENCEMENT SPEAKER
Dr. Orlando B. Molina

VIII
COMMENCEMENT ADDRESS
Hon. Jose D. Lina, Jr.
Secretary, Department of the Interior & Local Government

IX
PLEDGE OF LOYALTY
by the New Graduates
led by
Joel Nathan L. Baguiwet

X
ADDRESS OF THANKS
Shin Kyl-Jin
Candidate for Bachelor of Science Major in Tourism
Magna Cum Laude

XI
RETIRE THE COLORS
Cadet Girl Scout Troup #3

XII
TRINITY COLLEGE MARCH

XIII
RECESSIONAL

Pro-Erap local bets fight over Puwersa backing

OLONGAPO CITY—Local supporters of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino and Puwersa ng Masa nearly came to blows here Friday as they competed for the endorsement of opposition senatorial candidates led by former first lady Luisa Ejercito and former Executive Secretary Edgardo Angara.

The presence of TV cameramen and news photographers prevented what could have been a melee and bad publicity for the local opposition groups.

But the heated confrontation continued even before the cameras, with the protagonists from both groups disengaging only when Ejercito's party arrived.

Edgar Geniza, dean of the Aura Mondrian College, had earlier been proclaimed as the official LDP candidate for Olongapo mayor while former base union leader Roberto Flores leads the local slate of the Puwersa ng Masa.

Reports said the commotion started when supporters of Flores shoved the supporters of Geniza.

Violence almost erupted when the two groups clashed as each group tried to get the best position in front of the stage to greet the Puwersa ng Masa candidates.

Police had to step in to avert violence when the shoving became more intense and rough.

Tension died down only after Geniza's followers retreated when LDP candidate for vice governor of Zambales, Ramon Lacbain III, assured them that Angara would attend Geniza's proclamation rally scheduled at about the same time in a resort nearby.

Despite the trouble that both groups went through, Angara refused to state categorically which slate the united opposition is endorsing.

"We have a multiparty party system and we don't side with any faction," Angara said, adding that even if the opposition in the local level has several factions, all these groups would still support them at the national level.

Ejercito supported the position of Angara.

After the press conference, however, Angara went to the nearby By the Sea Resort and proclaimed Geniza as the official candidate of LDP, while Ejercito joined a campaign caravan with Flores. *Elizabeth Marcelo and Ansbert Joaquin, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Beach parties keep independent bets in touch with voters

By Chito A. Fuentes
PDI Visayas Bureau

TAGBILARAN CITY—A group of independent candidates here has taken its campaign to sea level.

And what better venue to discuss campaign issues with voters than at the beach?

"It all started with the idea of holding a Family Day at the beach for all our supporters and their families," said lawyer Dan Lim, candidate for mayor of the Independent Tagbilaran (IT).

He said the IT, which brought together candidates who have no national political affiliations, thought of hosting beach parties not only for supporters of voting age but also for their families.

"In between dips into the sea and the unique dining experience, we would discuss issues about the elections and the group's position on each issue," he said.

At least 10,000 people from the city's 15 barangays attended the group's first beach party on Panglao Island on April 1.

The group later decided to host parties for each village to make the events livelier.

Five villages would have completed their turn at the parties by April 20.

The party mechanics are simple. Partygoers bring their own food, the candidates chip in additional food and drinks and pay for transportation for people who don't have vehicles.

"We want to impress on our leaders the need for camaraderie and unity instead of building walls that create animosity," said Lim.

Children are a "must" at the parties because it is through these parties that they are introduced to the complex world of politics.

There is just one problem, according to Lim. Some of the candidates gained weight because of the parties.

The candidates don't swim to avoid sunburn and fatigue.

Lim said the gimmick is an idea whose time has come.

"We not only enjoy each other's presence in a more intimate way, we also relieve the tension and cool off the passions generated by the heat of the campaign," he said.

Lim said the independent candidates were first met with skepticism, but the absence of party affiliations later proved to be an advantage.

Lim said their opponents may have the biggest political party behind them, but "I don't know if they can reconcile oftentimes conflicting positions of each party they claim to support."

The group led by reelectionist Mayor Jose Torralba and Vice Mayor Jorge Cabalit claims to have the support of the Lakas-NUCD, PDP-Laban, Abag-Promdi, Reporma and Aksyon Demokratiko.

Lim said his group would support other candidates—from senators to board members—based on their agenda for Tagbilaran.

If his group wins, Borja said IT has committed itself to "healing," to put a stop to the vicious cycle of political vendetta following the takeover of a new administration.

Lim said IT's motto "One Family, One City," would be implemented if they win.

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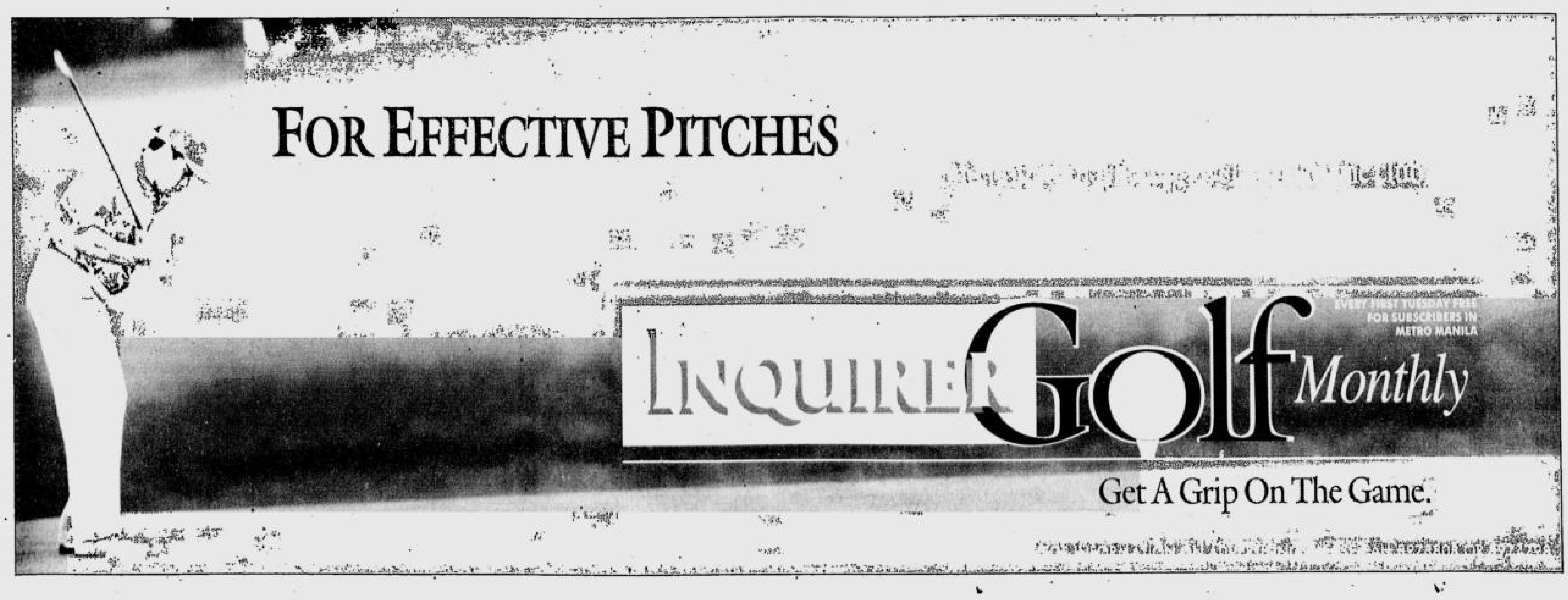
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Diploma of slain UP graduate sought

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

THE FAMILY of a University of the Philippines College Baguio graduate, who was abducted and killed last month, has denounced university officials for withholding his degree posthumously.

Charles Leung, father of the victim Giancarlo Leung, assailed UP president Francisco Nemenzo for removing his son's name from the list of graduating students.

The graduation rites are slated for today and tomorrow.

The elder Leung said he did not understand why the university would withhold his son's diploma although the UP Baguio University Council, which included faculty members, approved his graduation because he had completed his academic requirements before his death.

Giancarlo and a woman friend, Tihani Tingal, another UP graduate, were abducted and killed by still unknown persons early last month.

Their bodies, which bore bullet wounds, were found in separate places in Pampanga on March 8, three days after they were seized.

Police arrested several suspects belonging to a breakaway faction of the Samahang Ilokano fraternity based in Baguio.

The investigation is still ongoing, according to the Leungs. But they said they were not satisfied with the police theory that their son, chapter president of the Beta Sigma Fraternity in UP Baguio, was killed as a result of a fraternity feud.

Leung said the family had expected that their son would receive his degree posthumously today.

"This is so upsetting, as if our son's death was not bad enough. Now they give us this," he said.

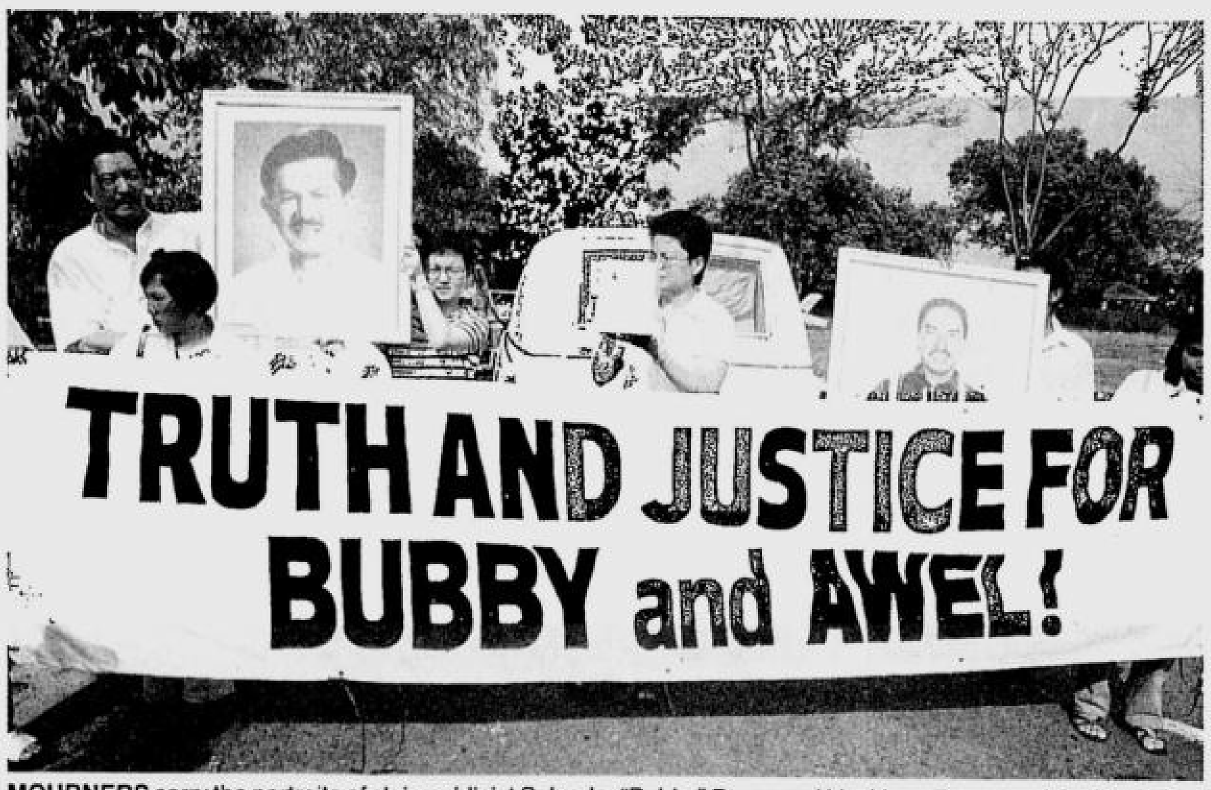
He said they were surprised to learn last Saturday that UP vice president for administration Martin Gregorio had instructed the UP Baguio college secretary on Friday to delete Giancarlo's name from the roster of graduating students.

Gregorio reportedly did not give a reason for the deletion, except to say "Giancarlo's case is a touchy one," according to Leung.

Leung said some UP Baguio professors who are against fraternities could be behind the move.

Cremated remains of Dacer buried

(From page A1)



MOURNERS carry the portraits of slain publicist Salvador "Bubby" Dacer and his driver, Emmanuel Corbito, at the Himlayang Pilipino cemetery in Quezon City.

JESS YUSON

people wearing white.

The slain publicist was often seen in an-all white attire. He also wore white when he and his driver were abducted on Nov. 24 last year.

Mourners carried portraits of Dacer and Corbito from the Santuario de San Antonio in Forbes Park, Makati City, where a three-hour video tribute was presented Saturday, to the cemetery.

State Prosecutor Ruben Carretas will preside over the preliminary investigation at the Department of Justice today.

Justice Secretary Hernando Perez announced the holding of the preliminary investigation earlier this month, after former President Fidel V. Ramos submitted several documents that he believed would help identify the masterminds of the double murder.

Perez said the DOJ expected to receive the sworn statements of six witnesses, four of whom were members of the disbanded Presidential Anti-Organized Crime Task Force (PAOCTF).

Perez said he had an idea about the contents of the sworn statements but declined to make any disclosure except to tell reporters he had goose bumps upon learning how Dacer and Corbito were killed.

Whether the documents submitted by Ramos will be relevant in the preliminary investigation remains unclear.

Ramos had hinted at a news conference after submitting his documents to Perez that deposed President Joseph Estrada and former Philippine National Police Director General Panfilo Lacson, now a senatorial candidate of the Puwersa ng Masa, may have something to explain about the murders.

Ramos had asked why Estrada, supposedly a close friend of Dacer, and Lacson, whom he personally called to report that the publicist was missing, took three days before acting on the case.

Estrada and Lacson denied involvement in the killings.

The deposed president even threatened to sue the INQUIRER for libel for quoting unnamed sources alleging that he was the mastermind. *With reports from Cathy Cañares-Yamsuan and Christian V. Esguerra*

What's wrong, right about party-list system

(From page A1)

were reserved for them.

Section 2 of RA 7941 (Declaration of Policy) states that "the State shall promote proportional representation in the election of representatives to the House of Representatives through a party-list system of registered national, regional and sectoral parties or organizations or coalitions thereof, which will enable Filipino citizens belonging to the marginalized and underrepresented sectors, organizations and parties, and who lack well-defined political constituencies but who could contribute to the formulation and enactment of appropriate legislation that will benefit the nation as a whole, to become members of the House of Representatives."

Section 3 defines "party" as "either a political party or a sectoral party or a coalition of parties."

Lessons from 1998

But from the first experience in 1998 emerged lessons and questions. Did the mechanics of the party-list elections indeed help the marginalized sectors gain entry in Congress? Or did powerful groups with vested interests use it to bolster their agenda?

But as they say, you win some, you lose some. Where lie the flaws and the strong points?

A group that took the party-list experience seriously by studying its outcome was the Institute of Politics and Governance (IPG). It assessed the "triumphs and failings" of the party-list elections and copublished (with the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung) a book titled "Democracy Rising? The Trials and Triumphs of the 1998 Party-List Elections." Agustin Martin G. Rodriguez and Djorina Velasco wrote the book, the main source for this article.

Only 13 won

Low. This was the turnout of the 1998 party-list voting. Comelec results showed a total of 9,155,309 votes for the party list, a mere 33.5 percent of the total votes cast. Interestingly, the highest turnout, at 44.6 percent, was in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Of the 52 seats reserved for party-list representatives, only 14 were occupied. Only 13 out of the 123 parties got the needed votes to seat at least one of three allowed representatives. Two percent of the total votes cast are needed for a group to send one representative to Congress, another two percent for a second representative, and still another two for a third.

If indeed the majority of voters came from the marginalized, why weren't they eager to vote for a group to represent them? They were already in the polling booths anyway. But it was not a case of eagerness but ignorance.

The IPG points to several factors. One was the novelty of the concept. For too long voters had been used to voting for single district representatives. To ask voters to choose another one (not a person but a party) that could represent their interest was befuddling. Many were simply uninformed, or worse, disinterested.

Education should have begun after RA 7941 was passed in 1995. A total of P110 million was meant for this, but the Comelec did not move fast enough. The new system was sprung on the electorate when the 1998 elections were fast approaching.

Groups that ran did so at the risk of not making it. They had a double burden—educating voters on the concept and mechanics while explaining their platforms.

What voters did

Because of the confusion and lack of information, the exercise was almost a waste of time, given the expense to get it started. Many voters left the space on their ballots blank. Instead of writing the party's name, they wrote the names of candidates or of sectors (for example, labor).

While the Constitution provides for voters electing two representatives, one from the district and the other from the party list, the spaces on the ballot for each representative were not set side by side. Voters did not get the drift.

During counting, election canvassers who knew next to nothing simply ignored the party-list votes. And then there were no clear instructions on the issuance of IDs for poll watchers who could have helped clear up the confusion.

Part of the blame goes to the unclear instructions on the ballot, which read: "Select one from among the Political Parties, Sectoral Parties (Labor; Peasant; Urban Poor; Indigenous Communities; Women; Veterans; Elderly; Disabled; Fisherfolk; Overseas Workers; Youth or Professional), Organizations or Coalitions enumerated in the certified list posted on the voting booth."

It couldn't get more confusing than that.

The winners

It was a wonder that there were winners in 1998. Of the accredited 123 groups, many of which did not have the capacity to campaign nationwide, 13 got the required 2 percent for one seat. Of the 13, only one (Apec) got 5.5 percent (503,487 votes) and, therefore, two seats. Only 67 got more than 50,000 votes and only 27 broke the 100,000-mark.

"If all 34,163,445 registered voters participated in the party list, would any single party have gotten 2 percent? And what if the scanty party-list votes were too spread out and no one got 2 percent?" asked Rodriguez and Velasco of the IPG.

But there were winners. Besides Apec, the winners were Aba, Alagad, Veterans' Federation, Promdi, Ako, SCFD, Abanse! Pinay, Akbayan, Butil, Sanlakas, Coop-NATTC and Cocofed. Almost making it was the Senior Citizens' Party, which landed 14th with 1.57 percent.

Post-poll questions

But this did not end there. The so-called wasted votes became an issue. The winning groups argued that the wasted votes could get them additional seats (their second representative at least) if the "variance" in their respective votes were considered after the required 2 percent.

If 2 percent meant one seat, did more than 2 percent (not necessarily 4) mean another seat? The Comelec insisted on its 2-4-6 percent formula.

The winning parties settled down but questions remained unresolved. Some of their representatives have since become visible and vocal advocates for their sectors, among them, Loretta Ann Rosales of Akbayan, Renato Magtubo of Sanlakas and Patricia Sarenas of Abanse! Pinay.

Rosales and Magtubo exposed the payola scheme in Congress and filed bills that would benefit their sectors.

Sarenas sponsored the Solo Parents Act, a bill on trafficking of women and children and several gender-related ones. They voted yes on the impeachment of disgraced President Joseph Estrada.

"We have made a good beginning," Rosales (a street activist and teacher who first gave a voice to the education sector in the 1980s) said in a TV talk show.

Running in 2001

It has become obvious to interest groups and individuals that the party-list system could be made to work for their purposes.

So now the scramble is on. Any group claiming an underrepresented constituency can file for inclusion. There lies the problem. How thorough is the screening? The Comelec has accredited 162 parties.

Is the system really only for the marginalized? Can't we all claim marginalization? Could big national political parties qualify as marginalized? Comelec's rules and regulations on the party-list system defines a "party" as "either a political party or sectoral party or a coalition of parties." It then defines each of these.

Akbayan's Rosales is still seeking an amendment to RA 7941 and a ban on business and non-marginalized groups in the party list. Her targets, the non-marginalized groups (like those in the construction industry) and those that had government support in the past, claim they have every right to be represented.

One look at the list would make one wonder whether there isn't any one that does not feel marginalized or whether electing a district representative has gone out of fashion.

Grain retailers, broiler raisers

By their names you shall know them. Seeking accreditation were truck owners, grain retailers, building administrators, fire fighters, broiler raisers and alumni associations. Not everyone got the Comelec's nod.

The Comelec considered several factors in deciding who got accredited, among them: the goal of the group, platform, the group will not put the election process in mockery or disrepute, juridical personality, non-affiliation with government-owned or controlled corporations and not entities with foreign equities.

Good news, bad news

The good news is that militant, ideological movements with a large following that rejected electoral politics for a long time are not only supporting the party-list system. They are also campaigning vigorously for seats in Congress.

They have seen how serious parties like Akbayan, Sanlakas and Abanse! Pinay have made a dent in a legislative body dominated by traditional politicians.

The ideological Left that had long waged its battles through arms is now participating through Bayan Muna. Its designated representatives are Satur Ocampo, former spokesperson of the National Democratic Front; Crispin Beltran, chair of the Kilusang Mayo Uno labor umbrella; and Liza Maza, secretary general of the women's group Gabriela.

But so are groups suspected as extensions of political dynasties and vested interests.

GMA, Tiglao set paradigm shift in informing people

(From page A1)

less *porma* and more substance." Tiglao quoted her as saying: "Just be candid. Articulate what we're doing." Tiglao will have fewer problems in being candid than his hapless predecessors, among them, Rodolfo Reyes, Fernando Barican, Ricardo "Dong" Puno and, finally, Mike Toledo.

Tiglao's milieu is different from that of his predecessors. In my understanding, the President and Tiglao share the idea that the job of the presidential spokesperson is to explain the government's point of view in its decisions and actions by providing factual information and pointing out their effects on the lives of the citizens.

Key word: Explain

The key word is "explain." Both the President and Tiglao are issue-oriented and understand economic issues, which have the priority in her administration's agenda, especially after the May elections. Ms Macapagal has few things to hide—not yet anyway—and so Tiglao can focus on explaining economic policies and programs, together with their political implications.

We don't need lawyers to do this job. Barican and Puno are lawyers—not the best training to explain economic issues but quite useful in obfuscating issues. However, Barican, Puno and even Reyes were not effective in explaining and defending the Estrada presidency because Estrada had many scandals to hide, too many controversial decisions and too many embarrassing relationships.

Estrada didn't level off with his spokespersons. No matter how well-educated and professionally trained his spokespersons were, they could not defend him with credibility because they did not know the facts behind the scandals, such as the textbook bribery scam or the diversion of "jueteng" money into the Erap Muslim Youth Foundation for which another lawyer, Edgardo Serapio, acted as a front.

Because many of the scandals were tainted by corruption, Estrada tried to keep the skeletons in his closet from the public, as well as from his spokespersons. That they were kept in ignorance was, of course, not their fault. Toledo's mistake, however, was that he thought he could defend Erap with glitz and a smirk.

When the scandals about deals and even about incoherent policy decisions, which were not the result of full Cabinet deliberations, broke out, the spokesperson at the time was as much surprised as the public. The spokespersons' client, the President, withheld critical information from them about controversial cases, forcing them to fall back on legalistic gobbledygook, such as invoking "due process" and the right of their client to reply to charges.

Thus, the spin and lawyers' skills were important in explaining Estrada's side and glibness held at a premium. This function, which was basically throwing a smokescreen or using squid tactics, was highlighted by the devious nature of his presidency.

Laquian case

Tiglao need not worry about the consequences of being candid, even less, of repeating the experience of Estrada's unlamented chief of staff, Aprodicio Laquian, who was sacked for being too candid about the nocturnal habits of Estrada in cavorting with his cabal making up the unofficial "midnight Cabinet." Laquian was dismissed after just 41 days in his newly created job of chief of staff because he had too much candor—he knew too many things and he talked about them to the press. Laquian was not in the right environment.

But the milieu of the presidency has changed. Ms Macapagal's concept of her office is that it is a platform—a bully pulpit, if you please—from which to communicate with the people and to engage them in informed dialogue, for the purpose of mobilizing public opinion behind the presidency. It is a view that respects the people's intelligence. This approach requires explanation, explanation and explanation—not intimidation or coercion or buying off critics. This kind of explanation is based on information—hard and truthful information—not spin artistry.

This, it appears to me, Tiglao understands, and so does his client, the President. In this way, they have a meeting of the minds. The presentation of the President's point of view and bringing the public around to this is a legitimate function of the spokesperson. There's at least a point of view or perspective to explain, no matter how controversial it would seem.

Right to know

The public and, of course, the press have a right to know. This right is enhanced if the presidential spokesperson is candid, accessible and, more importantly, capable of lucid and intelligent explanation. My impression is that the President and Tiglao are prepared to engage the public and the press in this kind of dialogue.

One piece of evidence is that Ms Macapagal is holding regular press conferences, is conducting them seriously and does not degrade these encounters with vulgar one-liners or slanging matches with the press. It's up, therefore, to the press to do its own homework and ask informed questions. It's a fact that many reporters attend press conferences unprepared.

The presidency, it is said, is a bully pulpit. One must not take this description too liberally. Although some presidents have used this office as a platform from which to hurl threats and to stifle criticism, the presidency is better served using the mechanisms of the presidential office to promote public debate and informed exchange.

During the Estrada presidency especially, the confrontational function of the bully pulpit was emphasized. This heightened the adversarial relations between the press and the presidency. It locked the press and the president in almost daily combat, which stifled the flow of ideas and accurate information because the purpose of the presidential dialogue was to hide the truth and to paint the press as sources of "disinformation" and lies. This relationship poisoned the information atmosphere.

New milieu

The milieu today, in which Tiglao is situated, is more amenable to explaining the presidency. With the question of its legitimacy having been settled decisively by the Supreme Court and with the prospects of the arrest of Estrada on plunder charges, the administration faces its test of political consolidation in the May elections. Whatever the results of the elections, it is inevitable that the Macapagal administration would grapple with the issues of economic slowdown or even a recession in the region.

The new spokesperson need not be embroiled in political contentions. He can illuminate economic and political issues. That's his job and there's no need to be glib.

De Villa ...

(From page A1)

in my Cabinet; Executive Secretary Renato de Villa may have to undergo a bypass (operation) Tuesday," she told reporters late yesterday afternoon.

"I myself lost 23 pounds to date," the President said during her rounds of the Palace grounds for the "Sundays at the Malacañang Garden" program.

The President mentioned De Villa's health problem when reporters noted how she remained vibrant even though she had just arrived from an official trip to Pangasinan the day before.

Ms Macapagal attended Mass in Pangasinan yesterday morning and immediately flew back to Manila for another Mass and a morning-long program for the Earth Day celebration.

She said that because of his health problem, De Villa failed to attend the annual Gridiron Night of the National Press Club on Friday.

She said she had told De Villa that she would just relate to him the jokes about him at the NPC program.

Press Undersecretary Roberto Capco said De Villa had an executive checkup Friday and was told that he had to undergo an angiogram. Doctors have discovered a block in a major artery, he said.

"The doctors are now considering any other option, including a bypass operation," Capco said. "No decision has yet been made on the part of the executive secretary."

Athletic training, fitness courses set

THE NATIONAL Athletic Training and Fitness Academy (Natfa) in cooperation with the UP-College of Human Kinetics and TEAM F.I.T.ness International announced yesterday that registration is still going on for its athletic training and fitness certification courses this summer.

Headed by Prof. Jimbo Saret, M.S. Athletic Training, Brigham Young University, and Dr. Larry Fee, Ph.D. Exercise Science, University of Hawaii, Natfa is composed of an elite group of internationally trained sports science, sports medicine and fitness specialists from the United States, Australia and Germany.

A pioneering endeavor, the certification courses are designed to train and accredit current and aspiring athletic trainers, gym instructors' aerobics instructors and fitness professionals.

Athletic training (level 1) certification course starts May 2-May 31, Mon-Thu, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Strength training and aerobics science certification courses are on May 4, 5 and 6 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

For inquiries and registration, please call Natfa at 921-7224 or proceed to Suite 315, Eagle Court Condominium, #26 Matalino St. Diliman, Q.C. (Near Sulo Hotel). Limited slots only. Please register early.

OLD FRIENDS

IOC President Juan Antonio Samaranch (right) congratulates Basketball Association of the Philippines president Gonzalo "Lito" Puyat II after presenting him a special gift recently at the Westin Philippine Plaza.

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Marc golfest

THE MARC 2000 9th Leg District 3810 Governor's Cup golf tournament will be held at the Sta. Elena Golf and Country in Cabuyao, Laguna today. Tee off time is from 7-9 a.m.

Hosted by Rotary Club of Dasmariñas Cavite and Rotary Club of Pasay Metro, the tournament has attracted celebrities like Hajji Alejandro, Bert Nievera, Gary Lising, Subas Herrero, Dingdong Avanzado, Emy Arcilla and Al Quin.

Others expected to see action are Rotarians from other district.

The modified blind Callaway system will be used in the event.

Batangas GP up; Pastor shines

BATANGAS Racing Circuit, home of the biggest car and motorcycle competitions in the country, will raise the curtain on another keenly-awaited motorsports season starting April 28-29.

Dubbed "Casino Filipino Grand Prix", the six-part series will feature the country's leading motorsports luminaries such as car racing champions Jody Coseteng, Nilo Pazcoguin, Jomari Yllana and Kookie Ramirez and motorcycle experts Jolet Jao and Toti Alberto.

Pagcor, through chair Ephraim Genuino, is fully supporting this year's motorsports season.

Highlight of the race weekend is the inaugural staging of the Philippine Asian Formula 3 Championship.

Pepon Marave, Richard Joson and Mark Goddard head the list of drivers vying in this prestigious championship patterned after Formula One racing.

Also in the calendar are the Formula Toyota Cup, Philippine National Touring Car Championship, Shell Helix Philippine Junior Touring Car Series, National Super Bikes Championships and Maxi Scooters Series.

Meanwhile, Carlo Pastor of Team TEC completed a sweep of the races in the opening rounds of the 2001 Shell Helix Philippine Junior Touring Car Series at the Subic International Raceway in Olongapo City recently.

Pastor defeated Carlos Anton of MP Turbo in the first round and younger brother Enzo Pastor in the second round to emerge as the only double winner in this annual series organized by the Batangas Racing Circuit Association (BRCA) and sponsored by Shell Helix.

Another IMP Turbo driver, Allex Padua, topped class C.

In the Philippine National Touring Car Championship, Kookie Ramirez of Petron-SRA and Ferdie Ong of Rota-Speedwelle split the races and shared first-place honors.

Ramirez outdueled Nilo Pazcoguin of Tom's-Auto Trend and Mike Aguilar of Caltex in the first round, while Ong outclassed Pazcoguin and Jody Coseteng of Toyota-Team Tom's in the second round.

Jungolf Chairman's Cup resumes today at Riviera

THE chase for berths to the Junior World and Optimist International meets in the United States resume today with the holding of the Jungolf Chairman's Cup at the Riviera Golf and Country Club.

Coming on the heels of a week of impressive scoring in the Southwoods Open, competition is expected to be tight anew when the country's top jungolfers tackle the former site of the Philippine open.

Artemio Murakami, unbeaten in his last two outings, will resume his campaign for another jungolf sweep this season agains tan improved opposition in Class A of the series backed by Northwest Airlines as the official carrier.

Durant takes lead

THE WOODLANDS, Texas—Joe Durant birdied two of the last three holes in a round of 1-under 71 on Saturday to take a one-stroke lead after the third round of the Houston Open.

Durant, who shared the first-round lead with Lee Janzen, was two shots off Janzen's pace going into the 16th hole Saturday. Durant birdied No. 17 to tie Janzen, and pulled ahead when Janzen bogeyed the final hole. *AP*

Patrick guns for 3rd title

SPORTSMAN Patrick Antonio of Cagayan Valley, acknowledged in the national derby circuit as *sabong* idol, will be gunning for a record third straight Cocker of the Year title when the 12th Ucap 6-Cock Derby unfolds on May 22 and 24 at the Mandaluyong Coliseum.

Antonio's bet, Starwars Sagupaan (in partnership with financier Tony Litonjua), is the current leader in the Ucap Cocker of the Year 2001 race with a total score of 53.5 points.

Tucked on Antonio's belt are the 1998 Coty award from the Araneta Coliseum-based National Cockers Association (NCA) and the 1999 Coty plum from the United Cockers Association of the Philippines.

Trailing Antonio Ucap president Butch Macasaet (BJ Greenwood I, 44 points), Esting Teopaco (EGT Stingers, 43.5), Pete Rodriguez (Roadmaster Cobra Balbina, 38.5), Jet Fernando (San Pedro GP Eagle, 37), Sonny Lagon (JBB Blue Blade Balbina, 35.5), Vic Yu (Mandaluyong Col. International, 35.5) and Ram Lopez (Altuz I, 34.5).

Antonio, a regular fixture in bigtime derbies, is also the main host of the "Sagupaan," TV show, aired every Thursday at IBC-13, 11:30 p.m.

3-way fight looms

A THREE-CORNERED battle for supremacy among NCA, Ucap and Metro Manila cockers will be the main fare of Mandaluyong Coliseum's "Prince Jerome Jobo 6-Cock derby" tomorrow and Thursday (April 26).

Hosted by veteran derbyist Lito Orillaza, the event sponsored by Sagupaan Super Feeds and Lakpue Drugs will have its submission of weights today from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. More than 40 participants are anticipated to compete.

Meanwhile, businessman-sportsman Vic Yu finally hit the jackpot Thursday night, after his entry Sir Vincent emerged as solo champion (5.5 points) of the 10th Ucap/San Pedro GP Eagle 6-Cock Derby. BJ Greenwood of Ucap president Butch Macasaet and Starwars Sagupaan of partners Tony Litonjua and *sabong* idol Patrick Antonio, are runner-up finishers with 5 points.

This year's second edition of the "Mandaluyong international 9-Cock Derby" sizzles on May 29, 31 and June 2 at Mandaluyong Coliseum bannering more than 75 local and international cockfighting stars. Derby hosts are Ucap stalwarts Vic Yu and engineer Sonny Lagon while sponsor is Sagupaan Super feeds and Lakpue Drug Inc.

Mandaluyong Coliseum also presents the "Kalayaan 7-Cock derby" on June 12, 14, 16, 19, 21, 23 and 26. For a low entry fee of only P20,000 and guaranteed prize of P5 million.

Dy hits 'sabong' critics

SPORTSMAN Joey Dy of Pasay City yesterday backed cockfighting fans for their support of the sport considered as one of the country's national pastimes.

"Cockfighting is well-loved by Filipinos much like bullfighting in Spain. Fans bet in cockfights much like they do in other sporting events like boxing, horse racing, car racing and even basketball games," said Dy.

He also lashed out at those "who criticize *sabungeros* when in fact cockfighting is actually a rich cultural heritage of our country."

Dy, husband of Pasay congressional candidate Connie, added: "Although our family had already divested its interests in the Pasay City Cockpit as early as 1997, I am not, and will never be ashamed of being called a *sabungero*."

He also noted that there are now more than 2,700 cockfighting centers all over the country and the sport could attain greater success if more support is given by the Department of Tourism.

PPSA
PHILIPPINE PRACTICAL SHOOTING ASSOCIATION

NOTICE TO ALL RESPONSIBLE GUN OWNERS:

In line with the drive of the Philippine National Police (PNP) to promote firearm safety and responsible gun ownership in the country, the Philippine Practical Shooting Association (PPSA) in cooperation with the PNP's Firearms and Explosives Division - Civil Security Group (FED-CSG) will conduct a nationwide simultaneous Gun Safety Seminar on Saturday, April 28, 2001.

All firearm owners - including those who intend to purchase or acquire a firearm in the near future are invited to attend the seminars. Participating PPSA member-clubs will be issuing Certificates of Attendance to the graduates of these Gun Safety Seminars, which is a requirement for the processing of new firearm license applications as well applications for license renewals by the FED-CSG.

Those who do not require a Certificate of Attendance but would like to attend a Gun Safety Seminar for the knowledge that it would impart in terms of firearm handling and responsible gun ownership are also invited to attend. Subject to the number of registered certificate participants and classroom space availability, some of the participating PPSA member-clubs are willing to accept non-certificate participants free of charge.

Please feel free to call the PPSA Secretariat or a participating PPSA member-club near you, for any additional information or queries concerning the nationwide gun safety seminars.

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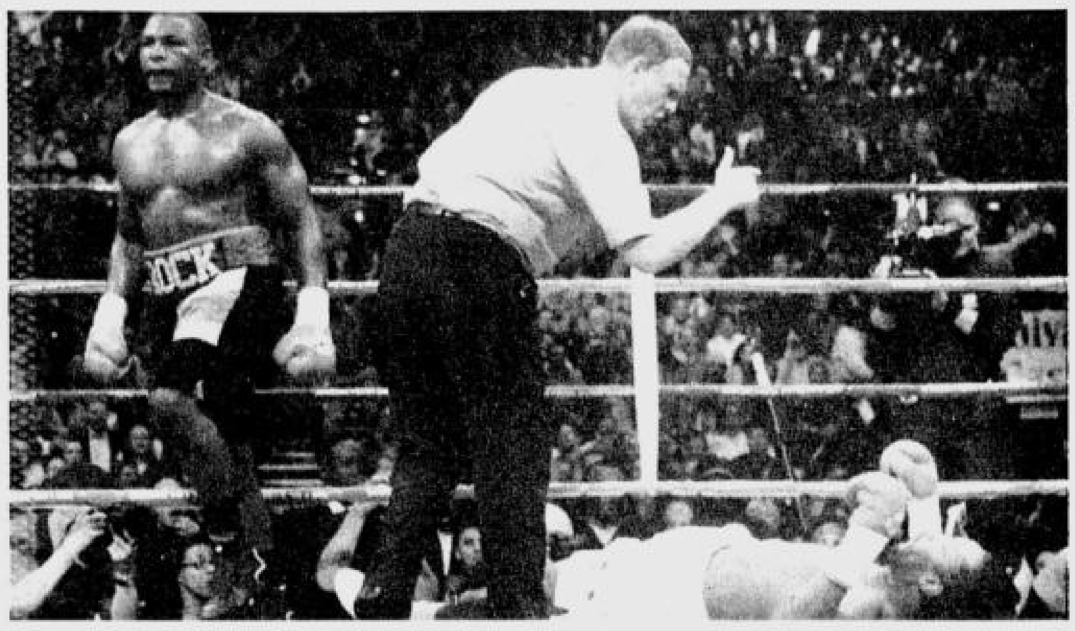

LENNOX Lewis (right) is counted out by referee Daniel van der Wiele after being kayoed by little-known challenger Hasim Rahman in the fifth round of their world heavyweight title bout in South Africa Saturday night. *Story on A24.* AP

Pop, SMB make it

GAMES WEDNESDAY: (Philsports)
5:15 p.m.—San Miguel vs Pop Cola
7:30 p.m.—Ginebra vs Shell

POP Cola unleashed the full force of its arsenal to crush Alaska Milk, 74-65, last night and march straight to the PBA All-Filipino Cup semifinals at the Araneta Coliseum.

Driven by a bunch of former franchise players eager to prove themselves, the Panthers didn't allow a single Aces' field goal in the final six minutes to avenge their loss last Wednesday.

It was extra sweet for Johnny Abarrientos, who seemed to pour out all his frustration over getting traded by Alaska in the off-season when he topscored with 15 points.

"They kept on saying that I'm over-the-hill," said Abarrientos in Filipino. "Tonight I tried to prove them wrong because I'm still very much in top shape."

He gave a glimpse of that form last night in spearheading the Panthers' first semis stint in three years.

In the second game, Danny Seigle made a three-pointer in the last 6.6 seconds as San Miguel Beer edged Batang Red Bull, 84-82, to make the best-of-five semis against Pop.

NBA playoffs telecast

VIVA Vintage Sports begins its coverage of the 2001 NBA Playoffs today with Game One of the best-of-five, first-round series between the Los Angeles Lakers and the Portland Trailblazers at 12 noon on RPN-9, with a replay at 5:30 p.m. on IBC-13.

Jordan return

NEW YORK—Michael Jordan would return to the NBA to prove he could still play at a high level.

"It's definitely the challenge," the 38-year-old Jordan said Saturday on the NBC television network, adding that he isn't ready to say he'll return next season. *AP*

Miller lifts Pacers

PHILADELPHIA—Reggie Miller hit a 3-pointer with 2.9 seconds left to lift the Indiana Pacers to a 79-78 victory over Philadelphia in Game 1 of their NBA first-round series.

Miller, who had missed 16 of his first 20 shots, came around a screen and took a pass from Jalen Rose Saturday before launching a 3-pointer from 25 feet (7.5 meters) that rattled in. The 76ers had a final chance, but Allen Iverson lost his dribble and couldn't get a shot off.

Miller had 17 points and Jermaine O'Neal added 12 points and a career-high 20 rebounds for Indiana, which rallied from an 18-point second-half deficit. Travis Best had 16 points and 10 assists.

In the other first round openers, Utah edged Dallas, 88-86; San Antonio downed Minnesota, 87-82, and Charlotte whipped Miami, 106-80.

Iverson, who won his second scoring title in three years by averaging 31.1 points, had just 16 points. *AP*

SSC spikers retain title

By June Navarro

BORACAY ISLAND—San Sebastian College watched Foundation University self-destruct to prevail, 19-21, 21-13, 16-14 and retain the Queen's of the Beach title yesterday in the 5th Nestea Beach volley University Challenge at the Galaxy-Club 10 Resort here.

Foundation's Rolyn Marquillas and Melanie Eralon was caught dumbfounded during matchpoint, allowing Jennifer Buhawe and Sheryl Tumayao to pocket the P10,000 champion's purse.

The 23-year-old Tumayao scored an ace for the final count as she made up for her pathetic performance in the first and last sets.

Nevertheless, the spikers from Dumaguete City remained a major force in the local collegiate scene as two Foundation University squads disputed the Kings of the Beach plum.

Foundation's second team of Kent Bulabon and Ralph Mingueto, made the best out of Isidro Bongcasan's tossing blunder in the endgame to win, 21-10, 27-25, and likewise earn P10,000.

Bongcasan tossed the volleyball with his palms, drawing a whistle from the referees and serving the crown to Mingueto and Bulabon on a silver platter.

Buhawe was adjudged Most Valuable Player in the women's division, while Bulabon, a first timer in beach volleyball competition, seized the accolade in the men's side. Foundation II lost to Foundation I on Saturday but bounced back with a 21-10, 21-13 victory to arrange a title showdown against Foundation I.

Frankie 39th

FILIPINO Frankie Miñoza double-bogeyed the first hole en route to a two-over-par 73 and finished tied for 39th in the Kirin Open won by Japanese Shingo Katayama at the Ibaragi Golf Club in Ina, Japan, yesterday.

In Lincoln, California, Dorothy Delasin matched par 72 to climb to 38th place going to the final round of the Longs Drugs Challenge. Delasin's 147 total left her 10 shots off Se Ri Pak. Jennifer Rosales struggled with a 76 and was at 149. *Jong Arcano*

DLS meet

THE La Salle Green Hills Alumni Association (LSGHAA) will be hosting the 2001 Bro. Dominic Berardelli Cup alumni basketball league beginning June 13, at the St. Benilde's Gym of La Salle Green Hills.

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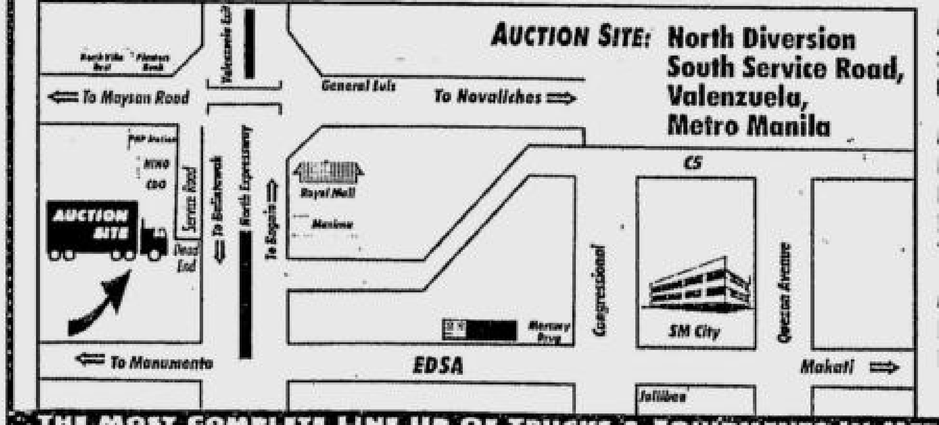

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SPORTS

AL S. MENDOZA, Editor ▣ EDWIN M. VILLANUEVA, Assistant Editor

Hingis-Capriati rematch

CHARLESTON, South Carolina—Martina Hingis won her 14th straight match at the Family Circle Saturday, setting up a rematch of the Australian Open final against No. 2 Jennifer Capriati. Hingis won eight straight games during one stretch in defeating No. 3 Conchita Martinez 6-2, 6-2 in the semifinals. Earlier, Capriati returned to the championship for the first time in 11 years with a 6-0, 6-2 win over unseeded Marlene Weingartner. *AP*

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BIG BOXING UPSET

Rahman KOs Lewis in 5th round

BRAKPAN, South Africa—Hasim Rahman flattened Lennox Lewis with a stunning right hand near the end of the fifth round to capture the WBC and IBF heavyweight titles early Sunday in one of the biggest upsets in boxing history.

The 28-year-old fighter from Baltimore chased the champion across the ring and, with Lewis smiling at him, unleashed a right cross that caught Lewis flush on the jaw and sent him sprawling to the canvas.

Rahman was dancing around the ring before Belgian referee Daniel van der Wiele went halfway through the count.

Lewis was unable to get up and, at 2:32 of the fifth round, the world of boxing had a new, totally unexpected, heavyweight champion.

The signs that an upset was in the cards came early, when Rahman (35-2) clipped Lewis on the chin in the second round.

Lewis seemed intent on ignoring his left jab, and instead concentrated on throwing big right hands.

In the third round, Lewis landed a left followed by a left-right combination, but Rahman responded with a big right hand of his own.

Lewis (38-2-1) had Rahman in trouble early in the fourth but was rocked by a left hook and hundreds among the 5,500 in the crowd at Carnival City Casino began chanting "Hasim! Hasim!"

Lewis' stamina was questioned because he arrived in Johannesburg only two weeks before the fight, with little time to get used to the 5,200-foot (1560-meter) altitude. That showed in the fifth round as he clearly began breathing heavily and the end came quickly.

Rahman, throwing punches on the run, had Lewis backpedalling and, although the champion grinned defiantly, the challenger ended the fight with a spectacular knockout punch.

"He got through with a great right hand. I went down," Lewis said. "I didn't beat the count. He won the fight."

The 35-year-old champion was taking part in his 15th world title fight and had been unbeaten for more than 6-1/2 years since being knocked out in two rounds by Oliver McCall in London on Sept. 24, 1994—when a right hand also floored Lewis.

He fought Evander Holyfield twice, scoring a draw and a decision victory, and had been hoping for a $100 million showdown with Mike Tyson. That fight had been put on hold because of a clash of TV contracts—Lewis is with HBO and Tyson with Showtime—and now may never happen after Lewis' stunning upset loss.

"No Lewis-Tyson! No Lewis-Tyson!" Rahman yelled in the ring after the fight.

Lewis went into the bout at his heaviest weight ever—253 pounds (114 kilograms), 16 (7 kilograms) more than the challenger, who also surrendered 3 inches (7 centimeters) in height and 9 inches (23 centimeters) in reach. *AP*

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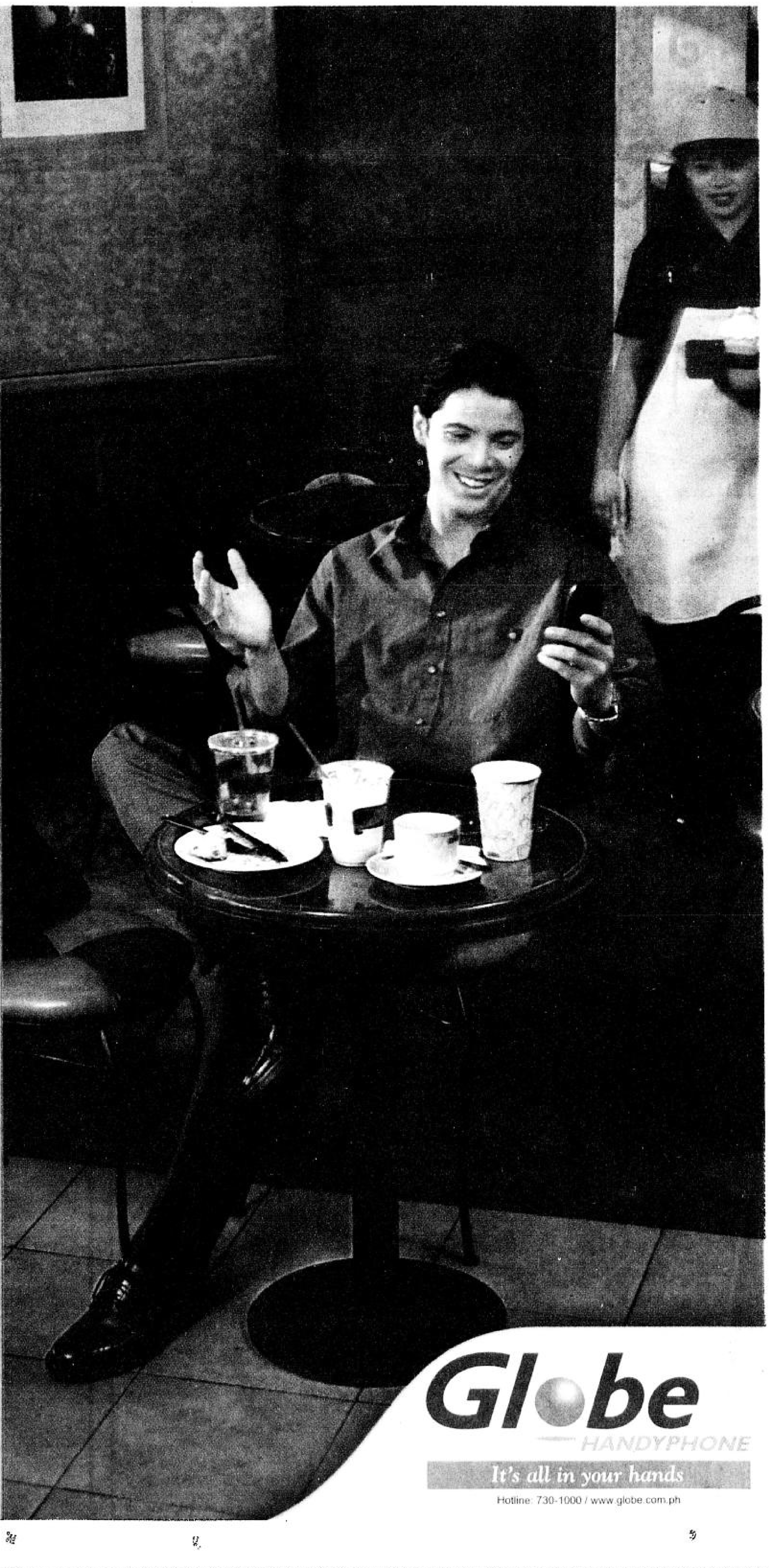

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METRO

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Man beats up 5 kids, rapes eldest child
A27

3 detainees ‘did dirty work’ in QC beheadings

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE NOOSE yesterday tightened around the neck of Supt. Jolly B. Dizon of the Batasan Hills police station after he failed to produce the two missing police suspects in the beheading of three young men in Quezon City last week.

Worse, a source told the INQUIRER that three inmates had "escaped" from the Batasan Hills police station before the gruesome murders happened and they were allegedly the ones who did the "dirty work" of beheading the three young men whose bodies were found last Monday.

Yesterday, Dizon was ordered confined to Camp Karingal in Sikatuna Village, Quezon City while his colleagues were preparing the filing against him of an administrative case and charges of graft and obstruction of justice, the source said.

Police were also supposed to file criminal charges against prime suspects SPO1 Rodrigo Llabres, PO2 Dennis Blasco, and PO2 Mario Morales last night before the Quezon City Prosecutor's Office, the source added.

Llabres and Blasco allegedly provided the van used in dumping the bodies of the three headless

3 DETAINEES/ A26

Girl, 2, drowns as boat sinks in Manila Bay

By Christian V. Esguerra

A WEEKEND leisure trip in the Manila Bay turned into a tragedy for a family after their boat capsized yesterday morning, drowning a two-year-old girl and injuring six other passengers.

The two-year-old, Jhelyn Villafuerte of Anakbayan Street in Paco, Manila, died before she could be brought to the Philippine General Hospital.

Ernesto Mendoza, 3, of 1313 South Superhighway in Paco, was still under observation yesterday at the PGH.

Jhelyn's mother Elsa Villafuerte, 31; brothers Jonathan, 11; and Enrico, 14; her godmother Gina Bantog, 35; and Ernesto's aunt Liza, 24; were

GIRL/ A26

Policeman shoots phone snatcher

By Christian V. Esguerra

A YOUNG man suspected of snatching a cell phone and attempting to stab a jeepney driver in Manila on Saturday night is in critical condition after a police officer shot him.

Ed Cajubi, of Parcel Street in Sta. Mesa, Manila, suffered bullet wounds in the left side of the body and the left arm after PO2 Richard Teoxon of the Eastern Police District Special Weapons and Tactics unit shot him at about 11 p.m. Saturday.

Cajubi was still under observation yesterday at the East Avenue Medical Center, according to SPO4 Herminio Gonzaga of the Western Police District Station 4.

Initial investigation showed that Cajubi on

POLICEMAN/ A26

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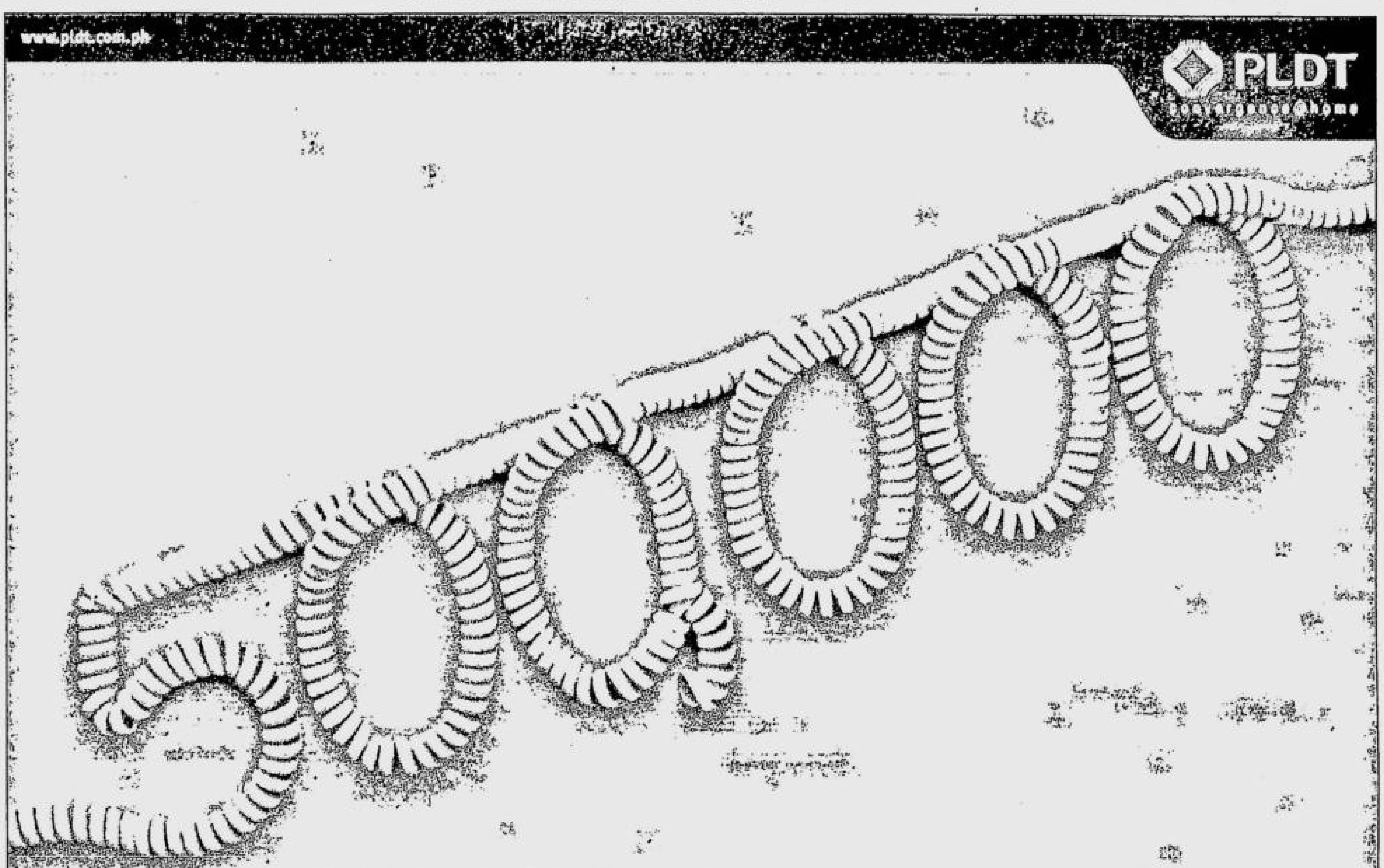

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Macapagal to visit Chinatown

PRESIDENT Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo will make a historic visit to Manila Chinatown today as part of a confidence-building effort with the Filipino Chinese community.

On top of the President's itinerary is a stop at the Federation Center in Binondo to induct newly elected officers, directors and representatives of the Federation of Filipino Chinese Chambers of Commerce and Industry Inc. (FFCCCII), led by Benjamin G. Chua Jr., president; John K.C. Ng, executive vice president; Robin C. Sy, Robert Siy Chin, John K. Tan, Vicente Sitosta, Joseph Tong and Tan Tian Siong, vice presidents; Francis Chua, treasurer; Jacinto Uy, auditor; and Jose Ngaw, corporate secretary and secretary general.

There will also be an informal dialogue between the president and the officers of FFCCCII.

Chua will also take the occasion to affirm the commitment of FFCCCII to support and cooperate with the Macapagal administration.

FFCCCII will make a symbolic donation to the President Macapagal of 350 school buildings, which were built under FFCCCII's Operation: Barrio Schools.

3 detainees...

(From page 25)

victims. Morales allegedly abducted one of the young men, Rolando Pupanes, 18, a week before the latter and the two others were murdered.

But Chief Insp. Rudy Jaraza, CPD-Criminal Investigation Unit-homicide section chief, told the INQUIRER that Morales "arrested" Pupanes for his alleged involvement in petty crimes in Tandang Sora, also in Quezon City.

Jaraza declined to say when the three policemen would be charged, adding that investigators were still collecting evidence.

As of yesterday afternoon, Blasco and Llabres were still missing, although they have allegedly sent surrender feelers.

The source said Dizon "borrowed" them from the District Intelligence and Investigation Division in Camp Karingal on Friday night.

Senior Supt. Rodolfo Tor, CPD chief, gave the beleaguered Dizon up to 3 p.m. Saturday to produce the two suspects but Dizon failed to do so, the source said.

For this failure, Dizon was sacked on Saturday and was "confined within the perimeters of Camp Karingal" yesterday, the source added.

But Dizon is in hot water not only because of the two missing policemen. The source said three inmates "escaped" from the Batasan Hills police station detention cell before the murders and the detainees are now also missing.

Investigators believe the detainees were also involved in the brutal killing of Pupanes, Kenny W. Azana, and a still unidentified victim who was 12-15 years old.

Records at the Batasan police station showed that the three detainees escaped on April 18 but the source said the escape was made earlier.

"The records show that these three escaped on the 18th but we conducted an investigation and it seems they escaped earlier than that," the source said.

He added that the three "escaped" on April 16, the same day the three young men were killed.

"We believe they were the ones who did the dirty work," the source said.

The three victims were found headless on Mindanao Avenue near Cresta Verde Subdivision in Novaliches, Quezon City on Monday night. *With Sharon C. Jaylo*

Policeman...

(From page 25)

Saturday night snatched the Nokia 3210 cellular phone of Arnel Iremedio, 22, a software company employee and a resident of San Juan.

Cajubi then commandeered a passenger jeepney driven by Victorio Garces, on the Sta. Mesa Bridge near Altura Street, police said.

When Garces tried to shove Cajubi out of the front seat of the jeepney, Cajubi pulled out a fan knife, police said.

PO2 Teoxon saw the scuffle and came to the driver's rescue, shooting Cajubi, who was found with the stolen phone.

Cajubi was rushed to the University of the East-Ramon Magsaysay Hospital and was later transferred to the East Avenue Medical Center.

Girl, 2 . . .

(From page 25)

rushed to the Ospital ng Maynila.

Only Enrico Villafuerte and Bantog have been discharged from the hospital as of yesterday.

They were trying to cross the Manila Bay from the Cultural Center of the Philippines toward Pasay when the accident happened, according to case investigator SPO4 Athos de Quiros of the Western Police District Homicide Division.

As their boat neared Roxas Boulevard across the Grand Boulevard Hotel, waves suddenly became stronger and overturned the boat, De Quiros said.

Initial investigation showed that members of the Coast Guard were quick to respond to the accident, but were unable to rescue Jhelyn.

Flood country now a city

BY CHRISTIAN V. ESGUERRA

A TOWN under water has become a city.

The Commission on Elections yesterday morning declared the flood-prone Malabon a highly urbanized city following the "successful" cityhood plebiscite last Saturday.

Malabon practically went through the eye of the needle in the plebiscite as residents favoring the cityhood narrowly edged those against it by merely 2,701 votes. The plebiscite was the last requirement for cityhood.

A total of 9,917 residents voted in favor of the cityhood as against the 7,216, who voted otherwise, according to Commission on Elections records.

The 17,133 residents, who trooped to 828 clustered precincts last Saturday, comprised roughly 10 percent of the total number of registered voters.

Despite the low turnout of voters, election officer Armando Mallorca declared Malabon a city at 1:30 a.m. yesterday.

Opposition Councilor Edilberto Torres blamed the local government for the "failure" of the plebiscite.

"Most residents didn't vote anymore because they knew the local government would cheat with the results anyway," he said.

Mayor Amado Vicencio and his spokesperson Abby Balatbat were unavailable for comment yesterday.

As a city, Malabon is set to increase its share of the internal revenue allotment from the national government by 150 percent, from P167 million to P400 million.

Say goodbye to Prof. Lennox Lewis

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

LADIES and gentlemen, do believe that we have a new undisputed heavyweight boxing champion of the world.

For those who had started to believe in Lennox Lewis as the undisputed king, it won't be easy saying goodbye to the outsized former champ.

People will find it hard to see through the hollowness of Lewis' claim to greatness.

Frankly speaking, Lewis, who had styled himself as a professor of boxing, was a very boring champ.

He was never dominant. He could not really make things happen.

And it's the height of irony that he finally created a great stir, a world-class excitement, not by scoring a career-defining win but by falling flat on his face and dropping his world heavyweight crown.

Sorry, Mr. Ex-champ, but we won't be missing you.

* * *

The last time world-class fistic fireworks flared from Africa was in 1974 Rumble in the Jungle in Zaire. George Foreman, just as big and even more menacing than Lewis, had himself appeared invincible.

But a supposedly aging Muhammad Ali stayed at the ropes for most of the early rounds, before carrying out a well-planned annihilation of Foreman who fell in fragments in the eighth round in that fight that has become an all-time classic.

There was nothing classic in the Lewis exit.

It was not easy saying goodbye to Mr. Foreman because he had amply proved his reign.

Strictly speaking, though, Lewis, despite his long stay on the throne, had failed to truly confirm his championship.

If there were regrets, they would be very few.

* * *

Yesterday's monumental upset came in a bout between a Mr. Nobody and Lewis who has started claiming he was one of the finest heavyweights of all time.

Unfortunately for the dethroned big man he had wrongly believed in his size and reputation.

He thought his challenger, the obscure Hasim Rahman, would be intimidated by his mere presence.

As Lewis had proclaimed, "Rahman had never seen a boxer like me."

Lewis may be right. But, at the same time, he had undermined the size of his opponent's heart.

And it — Rahman's heart — happened to be bigger than the international debt of the Philippines (according to boxing scholar Hermie Rivera.)

"There's no quit in me," Rahman had said. " I can't focus on what he has done to other people. He has never fought another person like me."

* * *

Well, there were many reasons behind Lewis' unexpected fall.

He had not only become too confident. He also allowed himself to grow too heavy.

Lewis did not spend enough time to get used to the high altitude of the championship venue.

Yes, Lewis, taller and supposedly more authoritative, was supposed to dominate with jabs. But he was even out-jabbed right in the opening round.

Lewis did not pressure and intimidate. He instead played it tentative and waited for things to happen.

When he got pole-axed with that mighty right, it was all over in one big crack.

Whammm!

* * *

Actually, the over-confident Lewis showed up with only one weapon: his right straight.

He was expected to utilize it like an axe. He tried and tried but just could not connect his trusted killer punch.

By the third round, that Lewis weapon had grown terribly heavy. He also started to lose steam, rapidly. He was now panting and breathing through the mouth.

Fatigue made a surprise and took control of his limbs earlier than expected.

He was no longer moving, he was gliding, riding on heavy, dragging soles.

He predictably became an open target.

* * *

Now, this could also look insignificant to the untrained eye. But Lewis had become careless and allowed himself to be tagged at the clinches.

In one instance, maybe in the second or third round, his head snapped back sharply at least twice.

Rahman never wasted a chance. He kept snapping short, sharp blows during lock-ups.

Not only that. Lewis, now visibly worn out, started throwing that lazy right as though he was hurling a pail of water at the challenger. He was heaving it, oh so long, from the shoulder.

Naturally, he kept missing, like a postman who could not find the right address—again and again.

Las Vegas bookmakers had pegged the odds at 20-1, meaning 10 bucks would fetch $200 in case of an upset.

We could not blame the oddsmakers. Just like us, they obviously have not heard enough of Rahman, who has created one of the greatest upset in the history of world boxing.

Before we know it, though, we might next be asking who was Lennox Lewis, and why he had fancied himself to be a professor of boxing.

Lim: Good governance has always been my policy

BY JEROME ANING

Voter's Voice ELEKSYON 2001 INQUIRER GMA

WHEN Alfredo Lim was a Manila policeman, according to his biographer Nick Jonquin, he "liked his records tidy and his endings happy."

Lim says recovering the Manila mayor's seat, which he occupied for six years during the previous decade, is the best way to deal once and for all with his "unfinished business" of eliminating graft and corruption in the city government.

Like with many other candidates, the much-used and abused issue of graft and corruption is the central theme of Lim's campaign. His political spiels are dominated by merciless and relentless diatribes against his major opponents in the mayoral race, particularly reelectionist Mayor Lito Atienza.

"Graft and corruption has become pervasive in the city since I stepped down," Lim said in an interview. "Good governance has always been my policy since way, way back, and proof of it is my name, which has never been tainted with any graft and corruption case."

Lim had a 38-year stint in the Manila police department before he became director of the Northern Police District and the National Bureau of Investigation. He had two terms as Manila mayor and a yearlong tenure as secretary of the interior and local government.

Based on his campaign promises, it would seem safe to predict that Manila's two million residents should expect the controversial policies that earned Lim the epithet "Dirty Harry."

LIM

For starters, he wants to restore his spray-painting drive against suspected drug lords in the capital. He also vowed to order the closure and demolition of a restaurant that he said violated historic Rizal Park.

He said that during his first 100 days, he would nullify the contracts of an allegedly abusive towing firm and an allegedly inefficient garbage management company hired by City Hall.

He said the towing firm is imposing questionable and unjustifiable high fees and its earnings have to be publicly accounted for.

Lim blames Atienza for the alleged return of prostitution and the sleazy nightclubs in the Ermita-Malate area, the worsening peace and order situation and the destruction of historic places such as the jai alai building.

In 1998, Lim had endorsed Atienza for mayor, which Lim now considers the "greatest mistake" he committed in his life. He said running again for mayor and defeating Atienza is the only way to save the city from disaster.

Lim describes himself as "a very religious person, a devout, practicing Catholic." He regards family values as those virtues that are in accordance with the Christian teaching and old Filipino tradition.

He admires thinkers and political leaders such as George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, Philippine presidents Manuel Quezon, Sergio Osmeña and Corazon Aquino, Cardinal Jaime Sin, and former Manila mayors Arsenio Lacson and Antonio Villegas.

Lim considers his maternal grandparents—Bernardo Siojo and Flora Siojo nee Valisno—and his godmother Dr. Dolores Lao-Conde as the most important people in his life.

"They taught me good manners and never tired of telling me not to hurt my fellowmen, and to be always respectful, helpful, obedient and humble" he said.

When his mother went to live with her second husband, Lim was left with his grandparents, rice traders who brought the young Lim to Sampaloc, Manila in the early 1930s.

During the war, Lim helped his grandmother sell rice cakes on the street. When his grandmother died in 1943, he was entrusted to Dr. Lao-Conde, their family physician, with

LIM: GOOD/ A28

Carlos: Human resource development is my priority

BY NINI VALERA

THE MAYOR is in. So is the doctor. And somewhere in between these two personalities of Valenzuela City Mayor Jose Emmanuel L. "Bobbit" Carlos, M.D., is a priest raring to get out.

"I wanted to enter the priesthood after high school, but my mother and my aunt who raised me told me to think about it," Carlos says. "Finally, I took up medicine and became a doctor like my mother."

The doctor who wanted to be a priest also became a public servant. And Carlos, 43, hopes to remain one for three more years, as he runs for his third and final term as mayor in the May 14 elections.

"I would like to continue our efforts to highlight human resource development as a priority program for the (local) government," he says.

So far, Carlos has succeeded in establishing several manpower training centers, including computer training centers, which "have already benefited thousands of people in Valenzuela."

He focuses strongly on education not only for the youth but also for their educators, making available to teachers scholarships and master's degrees. He also hopes to finish the ongoing construction of a science high school and energize the arts as a foundation for education.

Carlos also wants to revitalize his city's strength as the cooperative capital of Metro Manila. Which is why among his campaign promises is his vow to intensify his cooperative training programs.

"Our cooperatives have been the most successful," he says. "When I assumed office in 1995, we had more or less total assets of P50 million from our cooperatives. But as of December 2000, our total assets have risen to about P450 million."

These days, the doctor in the mayor surfaces in the sheets of prescription pad that he keeps in his wallet. It is also evident in the black bag that he brings with him in his car, which also has a medicine cabinet.

"Treating people is part of the service," he says. He believes that the essence of leadership was succinctly expressed in Dr. Albert Einstein's often-quoted quip: "Only a life lived for others is a life worth living."

Carlos says his selflessness and his dedication to the people, "whom I treated free of charge for years when I worked with cause-oriented groups and urban poor missionaries," make him proud as a human being. But in his political life, "I'm proudest of the establishment of our polytechnic college and our city college because there were no state-run colleges here before."

CARLOS

If he is reelected, Carlos says his first order of business would be a healing process in itself – "reconciliation with the different sectors of the city since there would be polarization among the different sectors during the elections."

So how would he cure the sicknesses of Valenzuela?

"We need increased police visibility to control drugs and crime in the city," he says. "And we have done this by giving the police force six additional police patrol cars, mobile cars, and other equipment."

Unlike the other cities in Metro Manila, Valenzuela, Valenzuela, Carlos claims, is not yet plagued with the garbage problem because the city has its own controlled dumpsite, which has even been considered by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) as a model for dumps.

What makes him the best bet for

CARLOS/ A28

'Bata' Reyes fan nabbed for stealing cue in Pasig

A MAN said to be a fan of billiards champion Efren "Bata" Reyes was arrested for allegedly stealing a cue yesterday morning in Pasig City.

Instead of playing billiards with his new cue, Kenjie Lazaro, of Santo Tomas Bukid, Pasig, found himself in jail and facing a theft charge.

Complainant Renato Espeneda, 41, identified Lazaro as the one who took his Brunswick cue, which he said costs about P2,500.

Espeneda told police he lost the cue around 1 a.m. yesterday. He said he was playing billiards with his friends in Sto. Tomas Bukid when they decided to stop for a while and drink beer.

Espeneda said he remembered placing his cue beside the billiard table. He said Lazaro had been watching the group all night.

Lazaro pawned the cue to his friend Eric Bulatao for P600. Bulatao told police Lazaro had stolen the cue. *Agnes E. Donato*

Binay accused of building dynasty

BY NELSON F. FLORES

MAKATI City Councilor Mark Joseph yesterday accused former mayor Jejomar Binay of trying to establish a political dynasty in the city with his and his son's participation in the local elections.

Lawyer Renato Bontal also asked the Commission on Elections to disqualify Binay from the Makati mayoral race because of his alleged violation of the anti-dynasty provision of the Constitution.

According to the lawyer, Binay violated the spirit of Sec. 8 Article X of the Constitution, which prohibits local elective officials from serving more than three consecutive terms. He also noted that Sec. 43 (b) of the Local Government Code also provides a similar prohibition.

Joseph said Binay's decision to run for mayor and the candidacy of his son Erwin for a council seat are, in effect, clear-cut attempts to establish a Binay dynasty in Makati.

He said Binay, who was city mayor from 1986 to 1998, succeeded in perpetuating his family in power by carefully orchestrating the political careers of his wife Elenita Binay, who became mayor, and his son who was Sangguniang Kabataan representative. Both were elected in 1998.

Joseph explained that Binay's hold to power was cut short by the three-term limit set by the Constitution for local officials. He said Binay had already fully served his three-term stewardship of the city.

Lawyer Bondal said: "But the intent of the law was circumvented when his wife became the city's chief executive during the 1998 elections. Now, he is running again while his wife decided not to run anew confirming suspicions that she merely became a seat warmer and that he (Jejomar) all along was the power behind city hall.

"What (Binay) could not do directly, he did indirectly," Bondal stressed.

Man beats up 5 kids, rapes eldest child

By Agnes E. Donato

INSTEAD of being a loving father to his five children, a 42-year-old man from Mandaluyong turned into a monster, allegedly raping his daughter since 1998 and beating up all of them for seven years now.

Yesterday, the man's 14-year-old daughter finally reported the rapes and physical abuse to police.

The girl told PO3 Sonia Gaviana of the Mandaluyong Police Women and Children Concern Unit that she and her siblings have been suffering since their mother left their father after she saw him with another woman.

The girl said that since their parents separated, their father, a taxi driver, always came home drunk about midnight.

"We would be sleeping on the floor by then, but he would wake us up and ask us to line up," the girl said. "Then he would slap us and punch us in the stomach."

The girl said that aside from the beatings, she and her siblings also had to suffer starvation. Their father did not earn regularly from his job as taxi driver, she said.

During the beatings, the girl said, their father would also tell them that he still loved their mother.

In March 1998, the girl said, he started raping her. She said he arrived home one night, lay down beside her and raped her.

The rapes went on for three years, she said, with her father raping her at least three times a week.

The last rape happened on March 11, the girl said.

She said she made several attempts to run away from home but her father would always find her and punish her.

Once, she said, her father punished her by shaving her head so that she stopped going to school because she was so embarrassed to be seen bald.

The girl's father is now facing charges of rape and physical abuse, police said.

National press forum set

ABOUT 200 editors and publishers of the country's national and regional newspapers will meet in Manila April 24-27 to assess the level of journalism practice and the coverage of corruption and governance.

The occasion will be the 5th National Press Forum organized by the Philippine Press Institute in partnership with the Konrad Adenauer Foundation. It will be held at the Angelo King International Center of the De La Salle University's College of St. Benilde in Manila.

PPI chair Amado P. Macasaet said the forum would give publishers, editors and newspaper executives an opportunity to discuss solutions to problems that the newspaper industry is facing.

The highlight of the 5th National Press Forum will be the awarding of the 2000 KAF-PPI Community Press Awards for outstanding work in editing, environmental reporting, business reporting and editorial writing. The awards program will be held at the Century Park Hotel.

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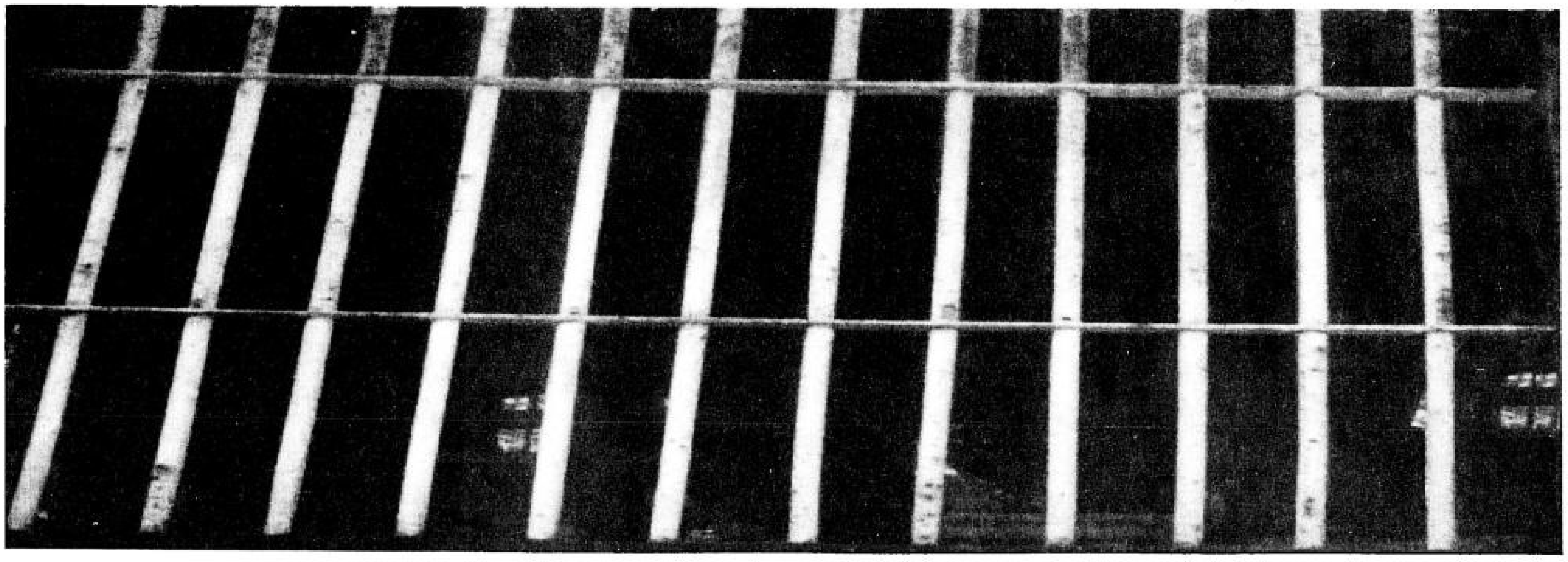

PARUSAHAN.

Sa ilalim ng batas, ang may kasalanan ay pinarurusahan. Sa demokrasya, ang lahat ay pantay-pantay.

Sa Chile, inaresto ang dating Presidente, Gen. Augusto Pinochet. Sa Yugoslavia, inaresto rin si Presidente Slobodan Milosevic. Sa South Korea naman, dalawang Presidente - sina Roh Tae Woo at Chu Doo Hwan - ang ikinulong sa kasong corruption.

Patunay lamang na sa mata ng batas, ang lahat ay pantay-pantay. Walang sinisino.

Pero, bakit pinagtatalunan pa rin kung dapat parusahan o hindi ang napatalsik na Presidente na nahaharap sa 13 kasong kriminal. Kasama sa mga kasong kriminal:

- P500 milyong suhol mula sa mga Jueteng Lord.
- P3.3 bilyon na "unexplained wealth" sa pangalan ni Jose Velarde.
- P150 milyon na "unexplained wealth" sa pagbili ng Boracay Mansion.
- P1.8 bilyon ng SSS at GSIS na ginamit pambili ng shares ng Belle Corporation at Waterfront Hotel.
- Pagbulsa sa P130 milyon Tobacco Excise Tax.
- Graft and Corruption.
- Pagtataksil sa tiwala ng bayan o "betrayal of public trust."
- Sadyang paglabag sa Saligang Batas o "Culpable violation of the Constitution."
- Plunder.

Kailangang harapin at sagutin ng dating Presidente ang mga kaso laban sa kanya sa korte. Utang niya ito sa bayan. Kung may "warrant of arrest," kailangan siyang ikulong dahil isa sa mga kaso laban sa kanya ay "plunder," isang krimen na walang piyansa.

Katungkulan naman ng ating gobyerno na ipatupad ang batas nang pantay-pantay at walang kinikilingan. Ordinaryong mamamayan, mayaman o mahirap o kahit pa dating Presidente, kung may kasalanan, kailangang parusahan.

Sa oras na maipatutupad natin ang batas, babalik na muli ang tiwala ng mamamayan sa kanilang gobyerno. Lalakas ang tiwala ng mga negosyante at mga foreign investor sa ating sistema political. Tataas ang antas ng pagtingin sa atin ng buong mundo. Higit sa lahat, manunumbalik ang respeto natin sa ating sarili bilang Pilipino.

Sa kabilang dako, kung hindi natin maipatutupad ang batas, hihina ang pundasyon ng ating demokrasya. May tinitignan at kinikilingan. May malakas, may mahina.

Pagtatawanan tayo ng buong daigdig. Mawawalan ng tiwala ang mga negosyante at mga foreign investor sa ating sistema pulitika. Mahihirapan na tayong makaahon sa kahirapan. Habambuhay na tayong maghihirap.

Sa kabila ng lahat ng ito, may mga nagsasabi na "kawawa" naman daw ang dating Presidente. Hindi daw dapat parusahan.

Pero, papaano naman ang hustisya?

ISANG PAGLILINGKOD-BAYAN NG DON JOAQUIN "Chino" P. ROCES FOUNDATION, INC.

Lim: Good governance is my policy

(From page A 26)

whom he lived for three years.

Lim worked to support his secondary schooling—as a shoeshine boy, a banana vendor, and a bus conductor during the Liberation days.

Lim said his experiences as a working student spurred him, when he was already mayor, to establish the City College of Manila, which gives free tertiary education to poor but talented students from the capital.

He considers the setting up of the city college as the achievement he is proudest of. "I don't want youths to experience what I experienced because they might not be able to endure it. I would want youths to concentrate on their studies and nothing else."

He is also proud of the four city-run hospitals for the poor that he established during his term—the Ospital ng Maynila, Ospital ng Tondo I and II, and the Ospital ng Sampaloc.

He considers his refusal to obey President Marcos' order to disperse the crowd at Edsa during the People Power Revolution of 1986 as his most important decision.

He said he found it hard to leave former President Estrada at the start of "Juetengate" because of "*utang na loob* (debt of gratitude)." Estrada had appointed Lim interior secretary in January 2000.

"The President was down and out, I know he was very much pained and I didn't want to add to it," he said of Estrada.

But he said that during the Estrada impeachment trial, he was among those who became indignant when the senator-judges voted not to open the second envelope said to be containing details of Estrada's secret bank accounts.

He said he decided to go to Edsa on Jan. 19 after learning about "a dreadful and unconstitutional plot" hatched by several top officials of the Estrada administration.

"All my life, I had been a law enforcer," he said. "How can I now contravene the provisions of the Constitution that I swore to defend?

"I had hoped my presence at Edsa could convince them to cancel their plot," he said, adding that he even used his radio program to urge all mayors, governors and all local officials to go to Edsa.

Lim said he would expose the scheme after the elections since some of those involved are running for public positions and could accuse him of politicking if he reveals it now. He did not know if Estrada was directly involved in the plot, he said.

> 'The President was down and out, I know he was very much pained and I didn't want to add to it.'

One of the issues being raised against him is his alleged influencing of the NBI in its investigation of Estrada's mansions. But he said he turned over the investigation to the justice department, which gave it to NBI.

"I didn't exonerate him," Lim said. "The probe was not finished because it was overtaken by People Power II."

Lim has questioned three Atienza projects which he claimed were tinged with corruption: the P50-million renovation of the Plaza Miranda in Quiapo, the P30-million street signs project and the P400-million Rizal Park boardwalk.

He also challenged Atienza to account for the P200-million assistance given by the Philippine Amusement and Games Corp. which then Vice Mayor Atienza received when Lim was mayor.

For Lim, good governance always starts with the basic virtue of honesty.

"We have a saying that the liar is the thief's brother," Lim often says in his speeches.

Carlos: Human ...

(From page A 26)

mayor, he says, is his "sense of service and sacrifice" because "being mayor is a sacrifice for me since my immediate family suffers the consequences of my long hours."

And it is his performance, he believes, that would send him back to City Hall for the next three terms.

Behind his bid are his family and his wife, Margarita Villegas Cruz, whose restaurant Pancit ng Taga-Malabon has contributed to his campaign funds.

Says Carlos, "I think they're doing this because they can be proud of me, my achievements as mayor, and simply for the honor of having a member of the family hold a highly-esteemed position."

As if being a doctor were not enough.

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Marquez to build hospital

PARAÑAQUE City Mayor Joey P. Marquez yesterday said the city government will begin next month the construction of the city's modern five-story community hospital with an emergency service helicopter for the poor.

The announcement was made after the city government acquired the environmental clearance certificate from the Environmental Management Bureau of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources, clearance from the Air Transport Office and certificate of approval from the Department of Health.

Marquez said an important feature of the hospital is a helipad where a helicopter would be standing by for medical emergencies.

The mayor said the city will hire the services of medical specialists.

Daboy to form traffic management council

LABAN ng Demokratikong Pilipino-Partido ng Masang Pilipino (LDP-PnM) Quezon City mayoral candidate Rudy "Daboy" Fernandez yesterday said he would form a traffic management and transport advisory council, if he wins in the May 14 elections.

Fernandez said the traffic management and transport advisory council would help him implement effectively the existing traffic rules and regulations.

He said the council would be composed of members of the transport industry, police, traffic enforcers, barangay officials, non-government organizations and the Church.

"I am convinced that the Quezon City traffic problem is not yet a terminal case," he said in Filipino. "What is needed is the political will to carry out traffic rules and regulations."

He said that if he becomes mayor of Quezon City, he would not introduce another traffic scheme. "What we need is a leader who will push the chief of police to strictly enforce existing traffic rules and regulations," he said.

METRO CAMPAIGN TRAIL

Buhain is Aklat party-list group nominee

PARTY-LIST organization Aklat has named former National Book Development Board (NBDB) chair Dominador Buhain as its first nominee for party-list representative, banking on his expertise and experience in the education sector.

As NBDB head, Buhain was deeply involved in the formulation of the national book policy and the national book development plan.

"We are concerned with the continuing decline in the quality of Philippine education today and the attendant need to pursue vigorous reforms for the sector," Buhain said. "Right now, there is no collective effort to address the wide-ranging problems in education and Aklat would fill that void."

The other Aklat nominees are Florinia Espiritu Santo, a licensed teacher and former officer of the education department, and Teresita Romualdez-Abiva, a registered chemist and book supplier.

ONE FOR ALL
Candidates of the Lakas NUCD-UMDP People Power Coalition in Pasay City make a show of solidarity: (from left) vice mayoral candidate Danny Roque, RJ Cabrera, Marlon Pesebre, mayoral candidate Greg Alcera, congressional candidate Connie Dy, Rolly Bacar (partly hidden), Bobot Aunor, Allan Panaligan and businessman Joey Dy, Connie's husband.

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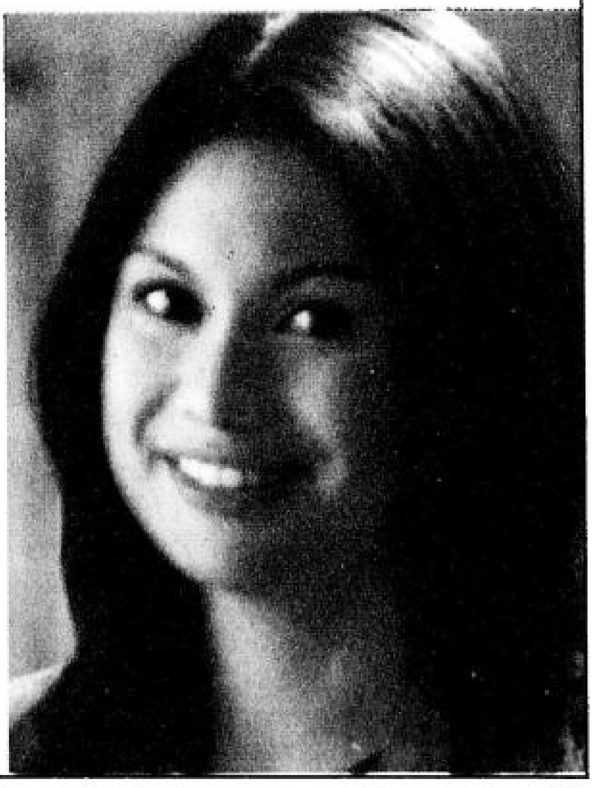

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2	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
4	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
5	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SWEET NOVEMBER
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
7	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION
8	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION

SM CENTERPOINT 7148522 · 7161416

1	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
2	DOLBY SURROUND	SEDUCER
3	DTS	SWEET NOVEMBER
4	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
8	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
9	DOLBY SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
10	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	RUGRATS

SM CITY FAIRVIEW 9350749

1	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
2	DOLBY SURROUND	THEY NEST
3	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
4	DOLBY DIGITAL	RUGRATS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
6	DOLBY SURROUND	MADERASO
7	DOLBY DIGITAL	SWEET NOVEMBER
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
10	DOLBY SURROUND	DOULBLE TAKE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER

SM CITY MANILA 5239240

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	ANTI-TRUSRT
2	DOLBY DIGITAL	DOUBLE TAKE
3	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
4	DOLBY SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
5	DOLBY DIGITAL	RUGRATS
6	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
7	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
8	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
9	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA
10	DOLBY SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
11	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3
12	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW

GUADALUPE COMM'L CTR 8820930

1	ULTRA SURROUND	HAPDI NG TAG-INIT
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS

SM MEGAMALL 6331801 · 6328401

1	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
3	DOLBY DIGITAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
4	DTS	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6	DOLBY SURROUND	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
7	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ANTI TRUST
8	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SWEET NOVEMBER
9	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
10	DOLBY SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
12	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA

SM CITY NORTH EDSA 9295452

1	DOLBY SURROUND	THE CROW
2	DOLBY SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA...INA
4	DOLBY SURROUND	RUGRATS
5	DOLBY SURROUND	ATTACK FORCE
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
7	DTS	SWEET NOVEMBER
8	DOLBY DIGITAL	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	DOUBLE TAKE
10	DOLBY SURROUND	THE SEDUCER
11	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
12	DOLBY SURROUND	AIR BUD 3

SM SOUTHMALL 8068686 · 8068782

1	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
2	ULTRA SURROUND	ANTI-TRUST
3	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	SWEET NOVMEBER
4	ULTRA SURROUND	ABAKADA INA
5	ULTRA SURROUND	MADERASO
6	ULTRA SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	THE CROW
8	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
9	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION
10	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSE FOR RENOVATION

TUTUBAN CENTER 2514302

1	ULTRA SURROUND	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
2	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	THE CROW
3	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	EXIT WOUNDS
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA

SM CEBU 2313876

1	DOLBY SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
2	ULTRA SURROUND	GLADIATOR
3	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
4	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY
5	ULTRA SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
7	DOLBY SURROUND	BAIT

SM ILOILO 3209422

1	ULTRA SURROUND	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
2	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
3	ULTRA SURROUND	BAIT
4	ULTRA SURROUND	WEDDING PLANNER
5	ULTRA SURROUND	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
6	ULTRA SURROUND	RUGRATS
7	ULTRA SURROUND	CLOSED
8	ULTRA SURROUND	MS. CONGENIALITY

SM PAMPANGA 7128015

1	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	RUGRATS
2	DOLBY DIGITAL EX	CHOCOLAT
3	DOLBY SURROUND	THEY NEST
4	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	AIR BUD-3
5	SYNTHESIZED SURROUND	UHAW SA INIT
6	DOLBY SURROUND	ABAKADA ... INA

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2 FINDING FORRESTER (Phil. Premiere) in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 EXIT WOUNDS THX (Adv. Screening) in DSD/SDDS/DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 DOUBLE TAKE in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 RUGRATS IN PARIS in DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
6 SWEET NOVEMBER in DTS/SDDS DIGITAL SOUND
7 ANTI-TRUST in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
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1 3000 MILES TO GRACELAND in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
2 SWEET NOVEMBER in SONY DYNAMIC DIGITAL SOUND
3 EXIT WOUNDS (Adv. Screening) in DOLBY STEREO DIGITAL SOUND
4 APRIL 20, & 21 GARY V. BY REQUEST 2 Onstage

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2 3000 MILES TO GRACELAND in DSD DOLBY DIGITAL SOUND
3 SWEET NOVEMBER in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
4 RUGRATS IN PARIS in DTS DIGITAL SOUND
5 DOUBLE TAKE in DTS DIGITAL SOUND

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2 (SDDS) ANTI-TRUST
3 (DTS) RUGRATS
4 GOLD (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
5 GOLD (DOLBY) 3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
6 GOLD (SDDS) AIR BUD 3
7 GOLD (DOLBY) THE CROW
8 [illegible] ATTACK FORCE
9 [illegible] MADERASO
10 [illegible] ABAKADA INA

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1 EVANGELINE 14
2 ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON
3 (DTS)
4
5
6 (DTS)
Golden Pearl THX

Masagana CINEMAX 1-2 & 3
(Kalaw) tel 536.4315
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2 (DTS) RUGRATS
3 ABAKADA INA

Masagana CINEMA V
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2 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
3 MADERAZO

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3 3000 MILES
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5 MADERAZO

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2 SEDUCER
3 ABAKADA ... INA
4 CLOSED
5 SWEET NOVEMBER
6 GLADIATOR
7 3000 MILES
8 THE CROW

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2 EVANGELINE 14
3 FAMILY MAN

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1 EVANGELINE 14
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JC Cinema
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3 CLOSED

GOTESCO CINEMA

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2 SEDUCER
3 ATTACK FORCE
4 MADERAZO
5 3000 MILES
6 ABAKADA ... INA
7 (DTS) ANTI-TRUST
8 (SDDS) DOUBLE TAKE
9 (DOLBY) THE CROW

Caloocan
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2 ABAKADA INA
3 RESERVE
4 RESERVE
5
6

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1 MADERAZO
2 ABAKADA INA
3 ATTACK FORCE
4 (SDDS) 3000 MILES
5 SEDUCER
6 (DOLBY) THE CROW
7 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
8 SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
9 OOOPS, TEKA LANG

Commonwealth
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1 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
2 DOUBLE TAKE
3 ABAKADA INA
4 ANTI-TRUS
5 (SDDS) 3000 MILES
6 ATTACK FORCE
7 (DOLBY) THE CROW
8 MADERAZO

Ortigas
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1 ABAKADA INA
2 MADERAZO
3 (DTS) SWEET NOVEMBER
4 3000 MILES
5 (SDDS) SEDUCER
6 (DOLBY) RESERVE
7 (DOLBY) RESERVE

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1 ABAKADA INA

Sampaguita
(Cubao) tel 911.7888
1 ABAKADA INA

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Dilson BODY TO BODY
Lords MADERAZO
Jennet ONE NIGHT STAND

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1 MADERAZO
2 ABAKADA... INA
3 SWEET NOVEMBER
4 ATTACK FORCE

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1
3 MADERAZO

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1 SWEET NOVEMBER
2 MADERAZO
3 ATTACK FORCE
4 ABAKADA INA
5 3000 MILES

Divisoria Mall
(Manila) tel 244.4560 or 244.4619
1 MADERAZO
2 ABAKADA... INA
3 EVANGELINE 14
4 PRODIGAL FIGHTER
5 ATTACK FORCE
6 3000 MILES

Baclaran LRT Cinema
tel 512.0115 or 512.0116
1 ABAKADA... INA
2 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
3 MADERAZO

CINEMA 2000

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa Laguna)
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1 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 THE GIFT
3 (DTS) ABAKADA INA

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 (DTS) RUGRATS
3 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
4 ABAKADA INA

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) SWEET NOVEMBER
2 MADERAZO
3 3000 MILES
4 (DTS) ABAKADA INA

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) THEY NEST
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 (DTS) RUGRATS
4 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
5 ROARING LION REGENT DRAGON

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Biñan) tel (049) 511.8883
1 ABAKADA... INA
2 RUGRATS
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 536.5101
1 ABAKADA INA
2 RUGRATS
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Olivarez Tagaytay
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2 BABAENG PUTIK
3 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

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1 THE GIFT
2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 RUGRATS

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376
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2 MADERAZO
3 DRACULA
4 EVANGELINE 14

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1 (DTS) DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT
2 (DTS)

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1 ABAKADA INA

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2 ABAKADA ... INA
3 UUBUSIN KO ANG BALA

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1 THEY NEST
2 THE GIFT
3 QUILLS
4 DI MAPIGIL ANG INIT

Berma
tel 879.2168
1 ABAKADA INA
2 ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON

CitiMall
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1 RESERVE
2 MADERAZO
3 ABAKADA INA
4 PROOF OF LIFE

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
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2 ABAKADA... INA
3 THEY NEST
4 (DTS EX) QUILLS

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Campus Radio, Channel V premiere 'The Mexican'

BE one of the first to watch the advance screening of "The Mexican," starring Brad Pitt and Julia Roberts, when Campus Radio 97.1 in cooperation with Channel V Philippines, premiere the movie at 8 tomorrow night, April 24, at Shangri-La Plaza Cinema 2.

"The Mexican" chronicles the tumultuous lives of lovebirds Jerry (Pitt) and Samantha (Roberts). Jerry, a reluctant bagman, is given two ultimatums that turn his life upside down. First, his mob boss orders him to travel to Mexico and retrieve a priceless antique pistol with a legendary curse known as "The Mexican" or he's dead. Second, his girlfriend tells him to cut off his association with the mob.

Jerry decides that alive and in trouble with Samantha is better than the more deadly alternative, so he heads south of the border. Finding the pistol proves easy, but getting it home and making it up to Samantha is another matter.

"The Mexican" is Roberts' first after her double victories as best actress at the Oscars and Golden Globe.

The movie starts its regular theater run April 25.

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Allan K returns to Phenomena

FUNNYMAN Allan K presents another riotous and fun-filled evening with "Wild, Wide Nose," a comedy and musical act, 9:30 p.m. on April 30 at Phenomena Disco, Timog Avenue, Quezon City.

Allan will dish out most-requested songs and stand-up acts which he is known for. His "Request" portion will add fun and excitement to the show, because Allan can sing any tune thrown to him.

Adding spice to the show is screen bombshell Rufa Mae Quinto.

For inquiries, call Phenomena at 412-6867 or SM Ticketnet at 911-5555.

ALLAN K.

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

ARANETA CENTER THEATERS 911-3101

ALI MALL CINEPLEX-1	ABAKADA INA
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-2	SGT MADERAZO
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-3 (SDDS)	EXITWOUNDS (Adv Screening)
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-4 (SDDS)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-5 (DTS)	THE CROW
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-6 (DOLBY)	RUGRATS IN PARIS
ALI MALL CINEPLEX-7 (DOLBY)	DOUBLE TAKE
FARMERS PLAZA-1 (DOLBY)	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
FARMERS PLAZA-2 (DOLBY)	EXIT WOUNDS (Adv. Screening)
FIESTA CARNIVAL	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
NEW FRONTIER	CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
MANILA	
EASTERN	
MAXIM	ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON
MIRAMAR	VIRGIN WIFE/TOO MUCH FLESH
ODEON	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
ODEON-2	ATTACK FORCE
ROBEN	ABAKADA INA
TANDEM-1	ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON
TANDEM-2	EVANGELINE 14
TIMES	PROOF OF LIFE/DEMON GATE
QUEZON CITY	
ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	CLOSED
ACT-4	CLOSED
CORONET-2	BAYAD NA PATI KALULUWA MO
QUEZON-1	ALIW MASARAP ANG LASON
REMAR	3000 MILES TO GRACELAND
REMAR-2	ABAKADA INA
CUBAO	
OCEAN SUPERAMA	BABAENG PUTIK
OCEAN CINEMA-A	PANABLA
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MANDALUYONG CITY	
SHANGRI-LA PLAZA MALL	635-20-79/633-78-51 TO 70
CINEMA-1	RUGRATS
CINEMA-2	SWEET NOVEMBER
CAINTA RIZAL	
STA. LUCIA EAST	(681-54091 TO 19)
CINEMA-1	ABAKADA...INA
CINEMA-2	MADERASO
CINEMA-3	SEDUCER
CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	THE CROW
CINEMA-5 (DTS)	SAVE THE LAST DANCE
CINEMA-6	SA HULING PAGHIHINTAY
CINEMA-7	GLADIATOR
CINEMA-8	DRACULA 2000
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	SWEET NOVEMBER
CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL)	RUGRATS
CINEMA-11 (SDDS)	DOUBLE TAKE
CINEMA-12	AIR BUD 3
CINEMA-14	ANTI-TRUST
CINEMA-15	ABAKADA INA
LORES	
CINEMA-2	DI MATIGIL ANG INIT / HIYAS
CINEMA-3	MS CONGENIALITY
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CINEMA-1	ANTI-TRUST
CINEMA-2	EXIT WOUNDS
CINEMA-3	RUGRATS IN PARIS
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ENTERTAINMENT

LOUIE C. CAMINO, Editor

Four excellent dinners and a 'possessed' TV set

KRIS AND TELL

Kris Aquino

LAST Thursday night over a late dinner at Le Souffle at the Fort, we got into a conversation about where we'll be travelling in the next few weeks.

I related that for the weekend of April 21, I'd be in Bacolod and the following weekend I'll be in Boracay for shoots for "Balitang Kris."

Zsa Zsa (Padilla) said she'll just be in Antipolo next weekend for her concert with Freestyle (April 28, 8 p.m. Saturday at the Ynares Center). But the following weekend, together with the whole "ASAP" gang, she'll be in Palawan from which they'll be airing live their May 6 telecast.

Pops (Fernandez) was keeping in touch with me that night via text messages from Singapore where she was taping parts of her summer special for ABS-CBN before sailing off on a cruise that will bring her all around Thailand. This special is Pops' glamorous, musical version of "Lonely Planet."

Rustom (Padilla) just closed a two-year deal with a Singapore TV station and he'll also be in Singapore next week for his contract signing.

Joji Dingcong, overloaded with work, wasn't travelling out of the country until September when he accompanies Martin Nievera on a European concert tour. But just the same, he was also headed for Boracay for the Labor Day holiday with some friends from Denmark.

NBC COO Marco Borlongan, who was in charge of the PLDT launch of "Brain IP VSN Solutions" that Zsa Zsa had just performed in that Thursday night at the NBC Tent, joined our group at the Fort's Le Souffle, and our mouths dropped when he said that he was also going to be in Singapore this coming week because he had to attend a private MTV party with no less than Ricky Martin. (Having to watch Ricky Martin perform is a job requirement we all wished we had.)

Keren Pascual was supposed to pay for the dinner, because I teased him mercilessly about Maurice Arcache's spread on his birthday dinner which labelled him "prince for a day." I think he got guilty because I jokingly told him I was hurt that I was omitted from his guest list because of the presence of former First Lady Imelda Marcos at the party.

Keren had actually tried to treat Zsa Zsa, Rustom, Marco, and me to Inagiku at Makati Shangri-La a couple of days before his actual birthday, but Manny Pangilinan surprised us with his presence (Marco and he had just watched a Mobiline basketball game and he happened to be free for dinner), and took care of the bill.

A couple of weeks back, Zsa Zsa sang at Keren's launch for Mercedes, and again he was supposed to treat us. We ate at Kulinarya in Katipunan, but Keren's best buddies Ricco Ocampo and his wife Tina, as well as Ricky Dee and his wife Beng, who were at the launch and joined us for dinner, beat him to the punch again.

Last Tuesday before our novena in Baclaran, Keren was supposed to host the dinner at Le Souffle, but Zsa Zsa's very good friend Angeli Sison, who was with us, again beat him to it.

And on Thursday night, Marco took care of the tab. Keren's "free dinners" are already a running joke among us friends. He's one lucky, super likable guy, who's been celebrating his birthday for more than a month now, and we've already had four excellent dinners in the process.

* * *

My television seems to be haunted. Several weeks back, for no apparent reason, my cable system suddenly got switched from Sky to Home Cable.

I live in a townhouse complex, and unlike homes that can have a switcher and have both cable systems, we have to make a choice since the built-in cable provision is only for one provider.

This happened after a brief power outage and I figured it might have had something to do with that.

After a week of enjoying Star World, Viva Cinema, Disney Channel and Fox News Channel, I called up Home Cable. They told me to contact Sky Cable since they were my cable provider. This was also around the time that Sky and Home had announced their impending merger, so a part of me had also figured that it might have something to do with that.

Well, I obediently called Sky Cable and that night they sent a technician who said that connection had been switched. He set the wiring right and I now had my ANC and Lifestyle Network back.

Things were back to normal for almost two weeks, until I turned on the TV this afternoon. My cable again switched to Home.

It's a bit freaky already! But what this has achieved made me realize that the merger of Sky and Home would really be beneficial for us consumers. I hope it happens soon, because we do deserve to have the best that both Sky and Home have to offer.

A cable system monopoly gives our cable provider more clout in negotiating the acquisition of additional international networks. That translates to limitless choices for us, at still reasonable cable rates.

I can't wait for the merger to be finalized and implemented. And frankly, I'm starting to have "Poltergeist" fears, becoming convinced that my TV set has become possessed.

Only in the movies

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

"SWEET November" is a remake of and update on a '60s romantic melodrama starring Sandy Dennis and Anthony Newley. Its current reincarnation has Charlize Theron and Keanu Reeves reenacting the treacly tale of a free-spirited woman who takes just a month to turn a grim advertising genius into a warm, feeling human being.

The concept is an unusual one, alright, and viewers are attracted to this lovely angel of romantic mercy who goes from one lover to an other, transforming them into wonderful people who will make many other women happy.

But it's basically improbable, and not even the most fervent thespic ministrations of the movie's two stellar leads can energize the tale with real life.

It's Theron who works hardest of all, because it's her pluperfect do-gooder character who's the movie's toughest challenge. How do you make such an unreal creature believable? Well, you act up a storm, and try to look like the most adorable kook and sexual therapist in the world.

But the actress' best efforts are for naught, because the character of Sara Deever remains an unconvincing creation—particularly when we're belatedly informed that she's terminally ill.

We wonder, of course, how she can be so vivid and breathless and passionate when she's desperately sick and is practically at death's door. – Well, only in the movies…

To make the film more current, Sara is surrounded with a number of unusual characters, led by an other advertising genius (Jason Isaacs) who turns out to be a cross-dresser.

This gay character is one of the few people who know about Sara's illness, and he's initially protective of her when Reeves barges into her life with all of his Mad Ave. excess baggage.

Later, however, as Sara succeeds in "humanizing" her latest romantic protégé, her gay buddy approves of Reeves and gives the couple the privacy and space they need to deal with Sara's rapidly deteriorating condition.

The movie's central premise of programmed redemption is irritating because we all know that life doesn't operate that way, and you can't make a person over in just one month.

Also off-putting is Sara's penchant for coming up with "wise," "sensitive" observations about living and loving at any odd time of the day or night, especially when her "insights" turn out to be so trite. If she'd only shut up, she wouldn't be so bad…

As for Reeves, he's given a character to depict here that's richer than usual, and he *tries* to deliver as required, but he comes up short—either because his character is unactable, or because his bumbling, mumbling limitations as an actor are too deeply ingrained for him to rise above them.

Still, Theron and Reeves do look good together. Now, if only filmmaking were as easy as doing a roseately romantic pictorial of two great-looking stars like these…

But it isn't, which is why this movie's November is far from sweet.

TV treats

TUESDAY, May 24 at 9 p.m. on Star Movies, "The Marrying Man" stars Kim Bassinger, Alec Baldwin and Elisabeth Shue.

Wednesday, April 25 at 9 p.m. on Star Movies, "Escape from New York topbills Kurt Russell.

Thursday, April 26 at 2:30 a.m. on Star Movies, "What's Love Got to DoWith It" stars Angela Bassett as Tina Turner.

At 9 p.m. on the National Geographic Channel, "Earthpulse" takes viewers to chilly Antarctica and Greenland, to meet off-the-road riding enthusiasts, and to see an extraordinary "donkey hotel."

TWO great-looking stars Keanu Reeves and Charlize Theron make "November" far from sweet.

Starmaker holds auditions for aspiring performers

STARMAKER, a duly accredited direct-link to casting agencies for movie, TV and modelling outfits, invites all talented and aspiring actors, models, singers and bands to a special audition at the Bohol Function Room of the Edsa Shangri-La Plaza on April 28, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Successful picks will comprise the latest pool of talents who will have the opportunity to be casted in entertainment events both locally and internationally.

All applicants must be preferably 13-18 years of age, with good scholastic records. For inquiries, call Starmaker at 687-2081 and look for Luna or Rochelle.

'XTREME WARRIORS'

In the tradition of Hollywood's smash hit, "X-Men," comes it Asian counterpart, "Xtreme Warriors," which boasts an international cast of Filipino, Chinese and American actors. The movie is directed by Philip Kho and produced by Solar Films. It stars Darren Shahlavi and Lee Kwang Soo, with Cynthia Luster.

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ANTI-TRUST - P 13 12:20, 2:40, 5:00, 7:20, 9:40	EXIT WOUNDS - R 18 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50	RUGRATS IN PARIS - G 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, 8:10, 10:00
DOUBLE TAKE - P 13 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30	3000 MILES - R 18 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00	SWEET NOVEMBER - P 13 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00

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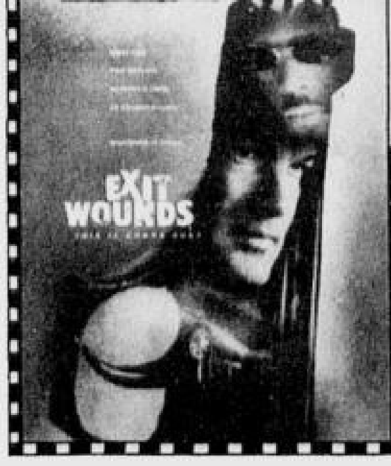

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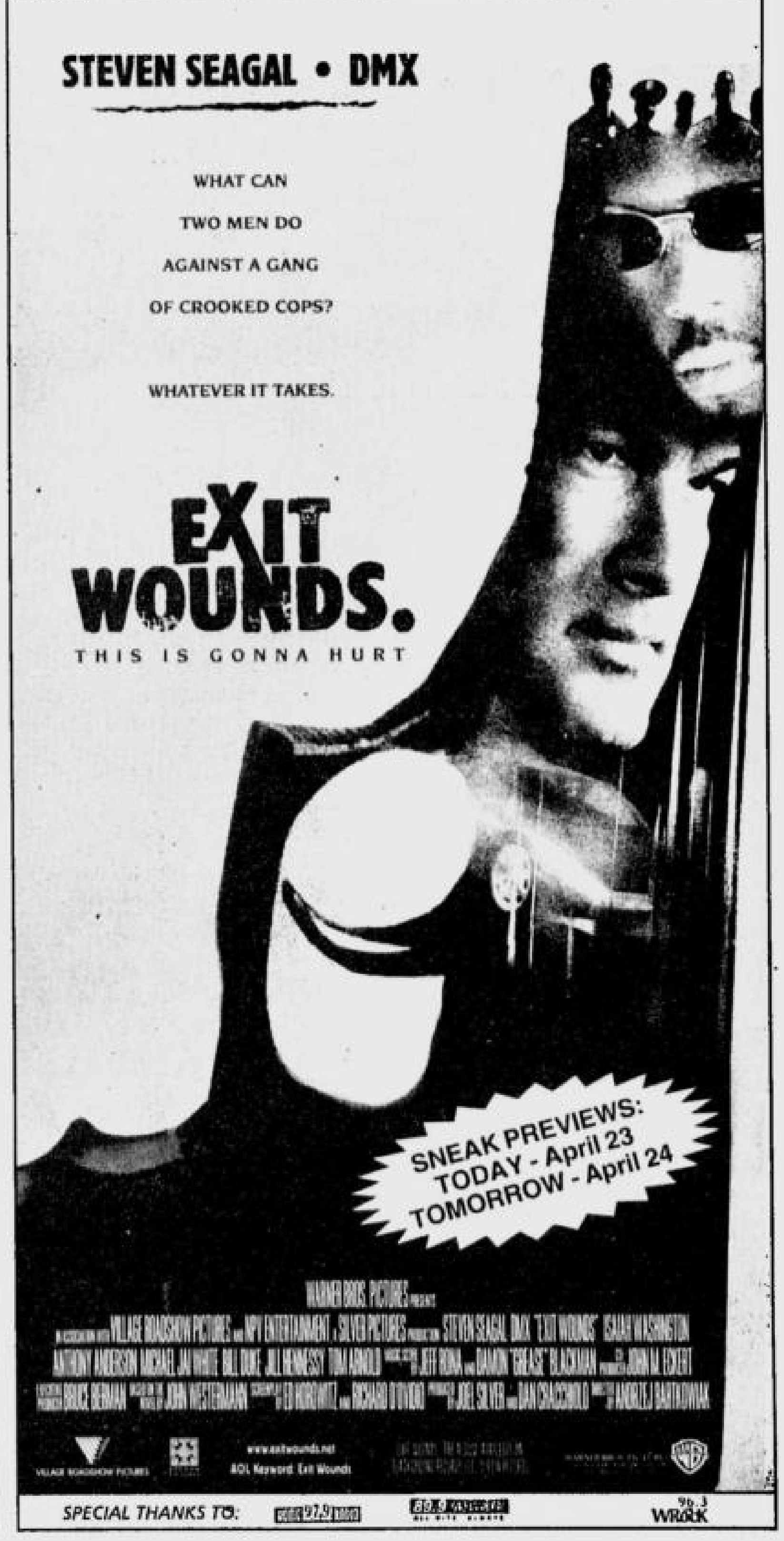

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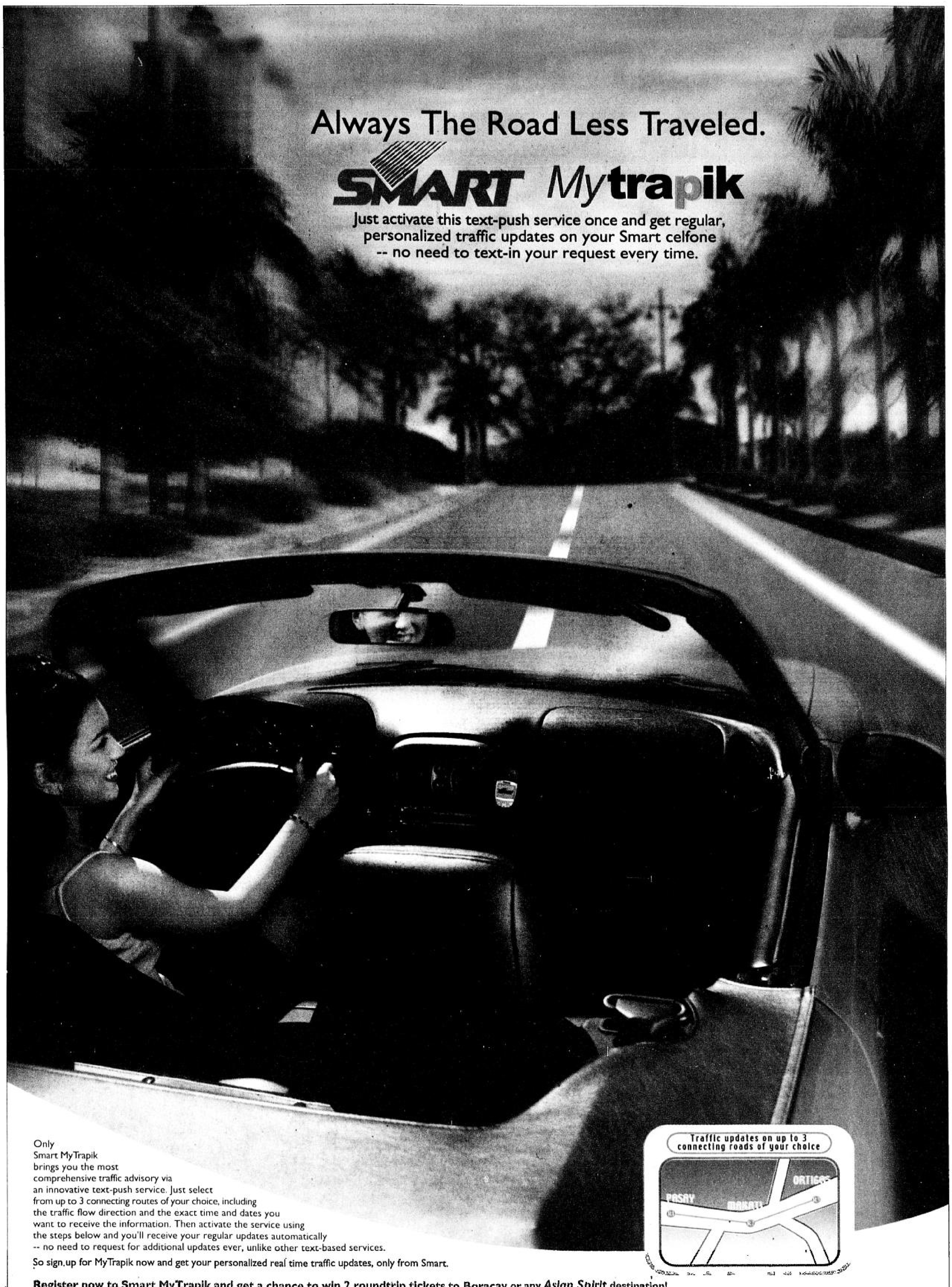
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Sy eyes Tagaytay Highlands project

BY DORIS C. DUMLAO

RETAIL tycoon Henry Sy is forming a multibillion-peso joint venture with property and gaming firm Belle Corp. for the development of the Tagaytay Highlands leisure estate.

The plan is for Belle to spin off more than six hectares—consisting of subdivision lots and unsold condominium units of Tagaytay Highlands International Golf Club Inc. in Tagaytay City, Cavite, and of Tagaytay Midlands Golf Club Inc. in Batangas—into a newly created subsidiary to be called Highlands Prime Leisure Properties Inc.

Well-placed sources said Highlands Prime, with an authorized capital of P3 billion, would initially be owned wholly by Belle. However, a substantial stake will be sold to a strategic partner while another 10 percent will be offered to Belle's existing shareholders and to the public through a maiden offering targeted within the third quarter of this year.

The sources noted that Henry Sy of SM Prime Holdings Inc. was willing to take the lead in the new venture and was now in talks to spearhead a consortium of foreign and local investors that would acquire a controlling stake in Highlands Prime. The patriarch of the cash-rich SM shopping mall empire already owns 25 percent of Belle.

Highlands Prime, with the financial muscle from the Henry Sy-led investing group, is envisioned to continue the development in Tagaytay and Batangas over a 50-year horizon. Sources estimated that the new development would cost P4 billion to P5 billion over the medium-term.

Sources close to Sy said the tycoon was even considering to fold into the new company the development of thousands of hectares of property in his Hacienda Looc in Batangas.

Belle, for its part, is embarking on the spin-off strategy to raise funds and retire debts, consisting of $86.5 million (of which $68.5 million represented outstanding floating rate notes) in foreign debt and another P2 billion in domestic borrowings. Key officials explained that interest payments and foreign exchange losses from these loans have been siphoning off a big chunk of its operating income.

The sources noted that existing Belle shareholders were willing to let go of the controlling stake in the new company to the Sy-led consortium in order to focus on the core operations of the company. They said only a minimum 20-percent stake would be left to Belle shareholders.

"The proceeds from these equity sales will be used by Belle primarily to repay most of its debt, with some proceeds also earmarked to fund capital needs for future property development projects," Belle Corp. said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange on Friday. The disclosure, however, was silent on the identity of the strategic partners.

The company said it was aware of the need to significantly reduce its debt load in order to enhance its long-term viability and reduce its vulnerability to economic cycles.

"However, the company's efforts to raise substantial equity for this purpose had been stymied by the weak Philippine stock market and the presence of non-core property investments at Belle. The launching of Highlands Prime is expected to unlock the value of Belle's core property development assets, which, despite the present difficult economic and political environment, continue to generate sales and profit," the disclosure said.

Although the operations of Tagaytay Highlands itself have been doing well despite the real estate slump, Belle has been operating in the red during the last few years due to losses in other investments such as Philcom and the 19-hectare Belle Bay Plaza project along Manila Bay.

After the spin-off strategy, the sources said Belle could still pursue new developments with a cleaner balance sheet. Sources noted that on top of the plush Tagaytay Highlands, it still had landbank assets of at least 600 hectares in Tagaytay.

Belle, currently with resources of about P20 billion, would still be the holding company for the estate's club shares. Tagaytay Highlands has 3,000 club shares worth P1.2 million to P1.3 million while Tagaytay Midlands has 6,000 shares worth P1.1 million.

INDICATORS

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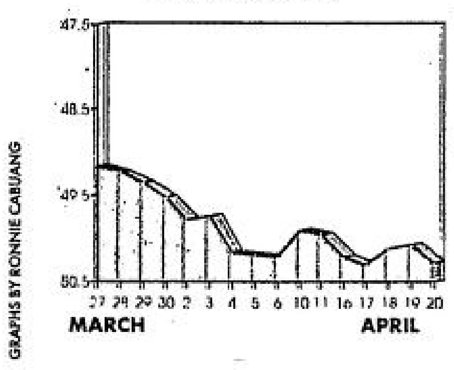

Peso-Dollar Rate

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As of 5 p.m., April 20, 2001

¥ 121.94 = $1
The US dollar was trading at 121.94 as of 5 p.m., April 20, 2001

GOLD:$265.00/265.50
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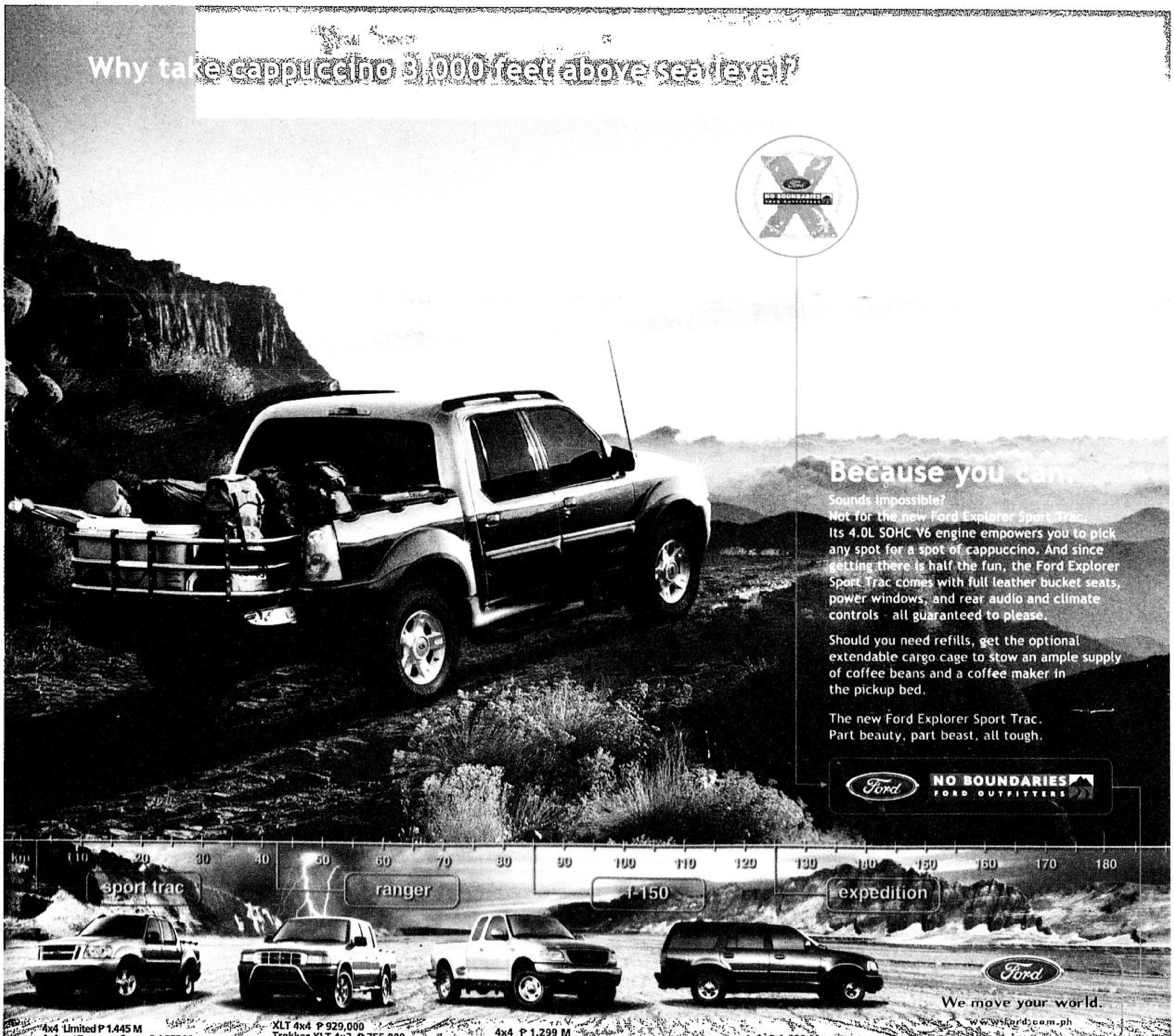
Dull trading seen

THE STOCK market is unlikely to show any significant pickup in volumes until after the May elections and the main index will continue to drift sideways this week, trading in a tight range of 1,420 to 1,450 points, barring any significant developments over the weekend.

Some analysts, however, were more bullish, saying there could be some upside today after the late flurry of buying on Friday.

"There was some renewed interest late in the session and it may be a sign that some investors are looking to position for first quarter results," Mercantile Securities trader Warren Chua said, adding stocks being targeted are those seen offering strong cash flow and profitability prospects this year.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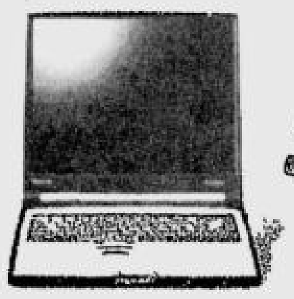

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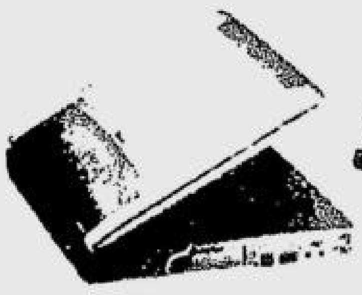

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UNITED OVERSEAS BANK PHILIPPINES

New Player on the Block Bears Heritage Of A Singapore Banking Giant

UOBP Ayala-Alabang branch

It is fast becoming a familiar sight in the country's business hubs --- the bold red, five-barred logo of the United Overseas Bank (UOB) of Singapore. Over the last two years, this corporate symbol has made its way to the busy districts of Manila, Makati, Cebu, Davao, Baguio and other key cities as well as provincial sites, identifying the branches and offices of UOB's Philippine subsidiary--United Overseas Bank Philippines (UOBP).

UOBP formally joined the banking industry only in late 1999. It is majority-owned by UOB Singapore, with prominent Filipino businessmen, the Tan brothers of Jollibee fame, as minority shareholders. With its over 80 branches, UOBP has the largest network among the foreign banks and foreign bank subsidiaries operating in the country. Its headquarters is located at the 17th floor of the Pacific Star Plaza along Gil Puyat Avenue in Makati.

About United Overseas Bank

A new player in the Philippine banking field, UOBP derives formidable strength from its parent institution. The United Overseas Bank of Singapore is recognized in the Asia-Pacific as well as globally for its highly profitable and prudent operations, excellent management and strategic vision.

Founded in 1935, the United Overseas Bank (UOB) has charted steady growth over the years to establish itself as one of Singapore's leading banks today. Its vast network of 277 offices around the world comprises 65 domestic bank branches and 212 overseas offices. Through its global branch network and subsidiaries, UOB provides a wide range of financial services. It has diversified into other business ventures, such as: travel, leasing, property development, hotel management, healthcare, manufacturing and general trading. Now on its 66th year, the Bank enjoys the admiration and respect, not only of the clients it continues to serve well, but also of the international financial community.

UOB, rated highly by Moody's Investors Service, just recently earned a rating of B+ in financial strength, the highest among Singapore's five local banks. Moody's also rated UOB as Aa2 and Prime 1 for long-term and short-term deposits, respectively. Citing the basis for UOB's high rating, Moody's Vice President for financial institutions, Deborah Schuler says, UOB has "very strong balance sheet, conservative lending practices and good earnings." **UOB has also been named "Asia's 3rd Strongest Bank" as well as the"Strongest Bank in Singapore"** by Asiamoney, in its evaluation of 58 Asian banks in 14 Asian countries. From US-based Global Finance, **the Bank has been ranked No. 62 out of 300 global banks in the publication's annual selection of the "World's 300 Safest Banks 2000", as well as named the "Safest Bank in Singapore."**

Financial Highlights

For the year 2000, the UOB Group reported a record after-tax profit of US$537 million or P26.3 billion. This reflects an increase of 20 per cent from the US$456 million or P18.3 billion net profit it achieved in 1999. The Group has been on a consistent growth track, despite the difficult years of the last Asian crisis.

The Group's consolidated assets is estimated at US$38.29 billion or P1.9 trillion, as of end of 2000.

UOB Philippines Set to Take Off

Backed by the credentials and resources of its parent bank, UOB Philippines is in the process of establishing its own foothold in the local banking industry. Right after its inception in late 1999, it put together a comprehensive, strategic program to strengthen its operations and lay the foundation for long-term profitability.

A vital part of this blueprint is the Branch Integration and Rationalization Plan which seeks to establish for the bank, a leaner but more responsive network of offices nationwide. This move is expected to result into fewer but stronger, better equipped chain of offices --- more capable to serve the range of needs of its banking clients. The transfer of UOBP's headquarters from Binondo, Manila to the Pacific Star Plaza in Makati last November is also part of the bid to sharpen the Bank's ability to compete in the country's main business district.

UOBP is likewise benefitting from the technological savvy of its parent bank as it works double-time to upgrade its electronic infrastructure, providing the groundwork for the more sophisticated financial services UOB Singapore is known for. The Bank has, thus far, computerized all operating systems, with 79 of its branches operating online. It also has 30 Automated Tellering Machines, including three in offsite locations. Last year, the Bank issued its Unilink ATM Card giving its cardholders access to the full array of ATM services, including bills payment and Bancnet's POS "cashless shopping" facility. It also intends to start offering phone card pins through the ATM within the next few weeks. Still harnessing Information Technology to get even closer to its clientele, the Bank now welcomes surfers to its website at: www.uob.com.ph. A fully dedicated Information Technology Division housed at the Pearlbank Center in Makati oversees all of UOBP's technology support and development projects.

Simultaneously, the Bank is deep at work refining its range of products and services. Its first offering for the year is a checking account with a tiered interest rate plan, aptly called the **Check Premium Account.**

The UOBP Team

Leading UOB's Philippine Team is Chief Executive Officer Chua Teng Hui, with more than 30 years of experience in international trade and remittance operations, both with UOB Singapore which he joined in 1988, and with a global American bank. Teaming up with him is Deputy CEO, Wang Lian Khee, himself a veteran of overseas operations, heading for many years UOB's profitable branch in Australia. He now directly supervises UOBP's credit and marketing strategies.

Assisting them in senior management are ranking Filipino executives whose combined expertise and experience from previous stints with leading local and foreign banks, complement the Bank's immediate and long-term business goals. Supporting the corporate leadership is a corps of professionals who believe in making a difference in the lives of a whole range of customers.

The Vision

Everyone at UOBP looks to a single direction -- to help its parent-bank realize its vision of becoming a premier regional bank in the Asia Pacific, offering innovative services and excellent customer service. In support of this vision, it has likewise adopted the corporate values that serve as a bedrock for UOB's entire operations: integrity, trust and respect, teamwork and performance excellence.

Having been in the Philippines for less than two years, UOB braces itself for the long haul. Its incursion in the local market is part of a strategic move to strengthen and expand its regional presence, which already covers China, HongKong, Japan, Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand and Australia, in addition to key cities in America and Europe.

UOB is bullish about the Philippines despite the economic difficulties that the country currently faces. It also has, in fact, established here a wholly-owned stockbroking company, UOB Securities. An overriding commitment in UOB's expansion moves is the spirit of partnership it intends to uphold with every host country it deals with.

The next time you see that bold red, five-barred UOB symbol, remember that it tells an inspiring story of how a once small bank, built on entrepreneurship and strong corporate values, grew to be one of Singapore's biggest and most-admired institutions. It brings to the Philippines the same soundness, prudence and confidence in the future which has served its customers well, through all its 66 years in business.

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UNITED OVERSEAS BANK
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Gov't, Cojuangco camp seek compromise on SMC, Cocobank

By Clarissa S. Batino

GOVERNMENT lawyers are planning to propose an 80-20 compromise with the group of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco to finally settle the ownership of 27 percent in San Miguel Corp. and 95.5 percent in United Coconut Planters Bank.

A government source quoting Solicitor General Simeon Marcelo said the government has opened informal talks with Cojuangco's camp to explore the possibility of an out-of-court settlement over the much-contested sequestered shares in the country's biggest food and beverage company and ninth largest lender.

The compromise was initiated by the government to finally resolve a 15-year impasse on the ownership issue in SMC and UCPB which could drag on and be inherited by succeeding administrations.

The shares in San Miguel and UCPB were sequestered by the wealth-hunting body, the Presidential Commission on Good Government, put up during the time of former President Corazon Aquino.

Curiously, the ownership of these sequestered assets believed to be ill-gotten were not resolved by the Aquino and the Ramos administrations.

An 80-20 arrangement in favor of the government would leave the Macapagal administration, through the PCGG, a 21.6-percent stake in San Miguel and a 76.4-percent interest in UCPB.

On the other hand, Cojuangco would end up with 5.4 percent more shares in San Miguel and a 19.1-percent stake in the bank.

The compromise, however, is being strongly opposed by small coconut farmers who believed the government must firmly argue that the shares in SMC and UCPB were acquired using billions in pesos of oppressive coconut levy funds collected during the Marcos regime.

Thus, they claimed that the shares should be owned by the government because these were bought using public funds and small coconut farmers must be widely represented in both companies.

A compromise, according to them, was like admitting that Cojuangco's group had a right over the shares.

A market analyst pointed out that a compromise agreement would weaken the government's plan to seek control of San Miguel from Cojuangco specially at a time when state-owned pension funds are already gaining ground in soliciting proxies from its members to help secure eight board seats for the government in SMC's 15-member board.

The compromise, according to a government source, was brought up in view of the government's gaping budget deficit, which is expected to widen to P145 billion this year from P136.1 billion last year.

Selling the 21.6-percent stake in San Miguel and 76 percent in UCPB would help finance close to half of the deficit this year, some analysts had estimated.

With a majority in the board, the government could remove Cojuangco and five directors appointed by Estrada and finally install PCGG nominees—Renato Valencia, former president of the Social Security System; banker Octavio V. Espiritu who used to head Far East Bank; former Presidential Security Group head Gen. Leo Alvez; former Court of Appeals Justice Hector Hofilleña, and Bacolod businessman Francis Fuentebella.

The 27-percent sequestered stake held by the PCGG gives the government five board seats in San Miguel. The Social Security System and the Government Service Insurance System are each entitled to a board seat.

FOUR-YEAR RETAIL TREASURY BONDS

RETAIL TREASURY BONDS LAUNCHING

The Bureau of Treasury (BTr) recently kicked off its six-city roadshow to promote its P5-billion, four-year Retail Treasury Bonds (RTBs) issue. The bond issue is aimed at providing small investors with access to government securities as well as augment the government budgetary requirements. The joint issue managers and lead underwriters of the bonds are First Metro Investment Corp. and Land Bank of the Philippines. Photo shows (from left) First Metro chair Antonio Abacan Jr., Finance Secretary Alberto Romulo, Landbank president and chief executive officer Margarito Teves, and National Treasurer Sergio Edeza after the signing of the Underwriting Agreement during the Manila leg of the roadshow at the Manila Diamond Hotel.

Star TV tops list of potential PLDT partners

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

STAR TV, a wholly owned subsidiary of media mogul Rupert Murdoch's News Corp., is on top of the list of foreign media outfits being considered by Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. as a partner in its acquisition of GMA Network Inc., the country's No. 2 TV broadcast station.

An INQUIRER source said that aside from Star TV, other major media players in PLDT's short-list were Pacific Century CyberWorks (a Hong Kong-based firm run by a scion of tycoon Li Ka-shing), CanWest Global (Canada's biggest media conglomerate), and Sony Pictures Entertainment.

PLDT president and chief executive officer Manuel V. Pangilinan had previously disclosed that he was holding negotiations with representatives of several foreign media companies that he did not identify. The INQUIRER called up PLDT Friday but officials have not sent their reply as of press time.

PLDT is looking for a foreign strategic partner that would provide the financial and technical muscle to carry out its planned acquisition, through Mediaquest Holdings Inc., of a 66.67-percent interest in GMA worth roughly P9 billion. Pangilinan wanted a foreign partner that would allow GMA to tap the overseas market.

STAR/ B6

Urban's big depositors, SSS to join rehab plan

STATE-OWNED pension fund Social Security System and big depositors of Urban Bank Corp. have agreed in principle to participate in a P3.7-billion rehabilitation being proposed by Export Industry Bank and small depositors of the shuttered lender.

Norberto Nazareno, president of Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. and receiver of Urban Bank, said the willingness of the two groups to team up with the lone bidder for Urban Bank would be instrumental in the successful rehabilitation plan.

The P1.275-billion participation of SSS and the big depositors is the same level of commitment they had given to Bank of Commerce, which earlier planned to rehabilitate Urban Bank but had to back out early this year on fears of legal hitches in the future.

Of the P3.7-billion rehabilitation offered by Export Bank and the small depositors, P600 million could come from SSS while P675 million could come from the combined deposits of San Miguel Corp., Petron Corp. and Manila Electric Co. that they have agreed to convert into equity.

Of the P2.7-billion combined deposits of the three—P1.2 billion from San Miguel, P1 billion from Petron, and P500 million from San Miguel—25 percent would be converted into equity.

Also comprising the total package, according to Nazareno, is a P1.25-billion equity of small depositors to be converted from an existing deposit base of P4 billion to P5 billion; P300 million equity of Export Bank, and the remaining P817-million equity of Urban Bank and Urbancorp Investment Inc. shareholders.

"The big depositors and SSS have agreed in principle to join the rehab plan for Urban. But their agreement has to be formalized," said Nazareno who cautioned that being a lone bidder does not guarantee Export Bank the approval by the authorities.

He said banking regulators including the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas would decide on or before April 26 if the rehabilitation of the defunct lender and investment house could be entrusted to the Export Bank group.

Export Bank had teamed up with the National Association of Urban Bank Inc. and Urbancorp Investments Inc. Depositors and Creditors or Naud for the rehabilitation of both the bank and the investment house.

He also stressed that PDIC could not guarantee the bank immunity from lawsuits that it was requesting for.

"We can't give them (Export Bank) any immunity. They have to deal with the risks on their own," Nazareno said. He said even Bank of Commerce was not given such a guarantee.

PDIC also said it was willing to extend a P1.5-billion assistance to the group that would rehabilitate Urban Bank and its investment house affiliate.

The plan of Export Bank, Nazareno said, was to merge the bank and the investment house initially and eventually merge the surviving unit with Export Bank.

The merger would increase Export Bank's capital base to P6 billion. Export Bank is controlled by a group of exporters.

PDIC had suggested to the exporters' bank to simply merge the three units from the start.

"It doesn't mean that because they are the lone bidder that they would automatically get the rehabilitation approved. But because of their proposal, there is only a slim chance now that the bank would be liquidated," he said.

Urban Bank declared a bank holiday on April 26, 2000, after it run out of cash to finance the withdrawals. It was consequently shut down by the Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

Urban Bank has more than 14,000 depositors and deposits of P9.1 billion, of which only P560,000 was insured. The bank pointed to massive withdrawals reaching P4 billion in the last five weeks prior to its closure as the main reason for the bank's liquidity problems.

The BSP and PDIC later found out the liquidity problems were caused by the decision of top bank officials to prioritize withdrawals from the investment unit and to buy substandard receivables at the expense of its depositors.

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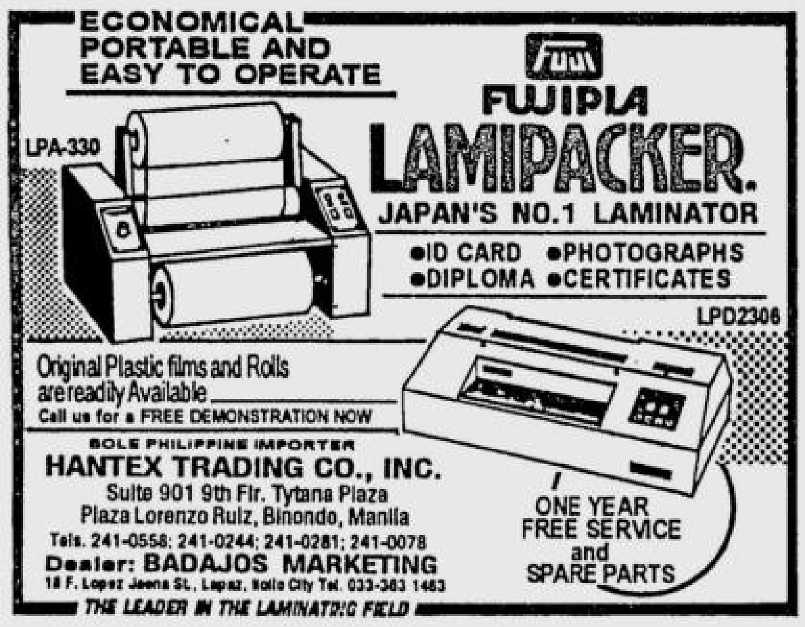
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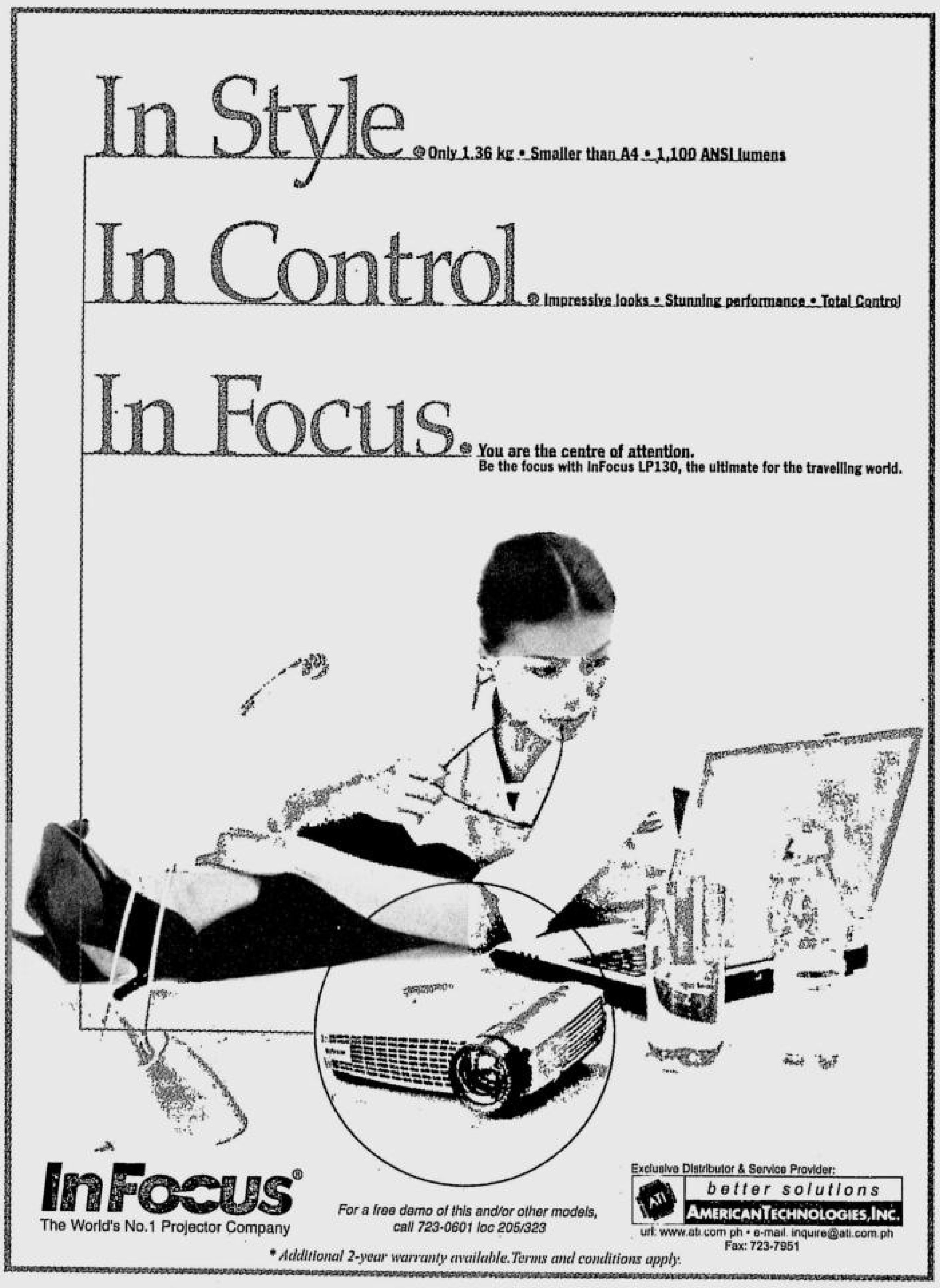
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1400 again and again

ON THE MONEY
John Mangun

THE STOCK market index continued to hold its own at the 1400 level after returning from the Holy Week recess. I read a comment the other day that the 1400 area was critical to the market, as a break below this would signal more downside potential. From a technical analysis point of view, that is probably correct. Having said that though, I am not comfortable with predicting that a longer-term rally would start from the current price area. Even Franky agrees with me there but we may both be wrong.

You see, conventional wisdom says that in order for a prolonged bull market to begin, we need to see some irrational selling at some point. Panic. Fear.

Blood in the streets. None of those has happened yet. Because a fall below the 1400 range would really target a move two or three hundred points lower, some serious selling might set in at around 1325. Then we could start a protracted climb upwards.

The other scenario calls for a move to the 1600 area from current levels and then a failure to break higher. That would mean a lot of investors would sit on the sidelines, watching prices go higher. And then just as they come into the market, a selling wave occurs, causing them to lose money and confidence, pushing prices even lower. Perhaps then panic would set in and a strong market would start. Franky leans toward this second picture.

I looked back at the trading history of the Philippine Stock Exchange since 1987 and discovered some interesting facts about this 1400 price.

The first time the Phisix traded in this area was in July 1987. The market had started that year around 500 and a lot of money was made in those few moths. Unfortunately, that high in July became the high for the year as political problems pushed prices back as low as 650 in December 1987.

The next time we saw 1400 was in the middle of November 1989. I should not have to remind you what caused the market to collapse from that point. More political turmoil bought the market back down to where we started in 1987. The Phisix finally bottomed out at 500 in October 1990.

It took a couple of years to bring prices back to 1400. In June of 1992, 1400 was reached and proved to be a short-term top for the market. Over the following six months, prices retreated to around 1200 as newly installed President Ramos began tackling the power problem. However, the low was reached in that December and the stock market never looked back from that time. Prices did not stop rising until we reached 3300 in January 1994. These are the "good old days" stockbrokers talk about and wish for today.

Recently, 1400 has been significant in its ability to be a bottom for the market. In 2000, no less than six times was the 1400 area the monthly low.

However, we do not buy the Phisix and I also wanted to see what actual stock prices were at times when I thought 1400 was a significant price area. Now bear in mind that the stock prices are adjusted for stock dividends. Nevertheless, that makes no difference for the sake of this discussion.

During the week ending July 1987, the Phisix hit a high of 1383. Look at the prices of three particular stocks during that time. San Miguel (SMC) was trading around P7.50. Ayala Corp. (AC) was below one peso at 90 centavos. PLDT (TEL) was trading at 138. When the market recovered back up to 1400 in November 1989, the individual stock prices were much higher. In the middle of November 1989, SMC stood at P21, AC at P5.30, and TEL was at P214.

The trip back down was ruthless but the bottom in October 1990 gave a fantastic buying opportunity with SMC bottoming near P6, AC at P2, and TEL at P90. When the market retreated the first time to 1400 during the Estrada presidency, SMC was trading at P34, AC at P3, and TEL a whopping P700.

Now we are at 1400 where we have basically been for the past 12 months. This time SMC is P46, AC is P7.50 and TEL closed Friday at P690.

Now I know you expect me to tell you what this all means. I am not even sure if it means anything. And I have yet to figure out how to make any money from all this brilliant information.

But the way this market is trading, as I said before, both Franky and I could be wrong. It is growing possible (but not yet probable) that a rally could begin with a whimper and not a bang.

Finally, I have a favor to ask of you. Ernie David, the action actor, is in a battle for his life against cancer. He is a good friend of mine and a relative, being married to my wife's cousin. Many of his movie friends like Fernando Poe Jr. and Sen. Ramon Revilla, along with Makati City Councilors Ibay, Javier and Medina have all helped. But Ernie needs more chemotherapy and it costs about P35,000 per treatment.

If you can help with his expenses, deposits can be made to BPI Family Bank, Savings Account No. 6026-5526-54. I guarantee Ernie will get the money.

He is confined at the Men's Ward of Makati Medical Center. Thank you in advance on behalf of Ernie and his family.

(John Mangun can be reached at 636-1121 TO 35, Fax No. 634-2349 or e-mail at johnmangun@yahoo.com.)

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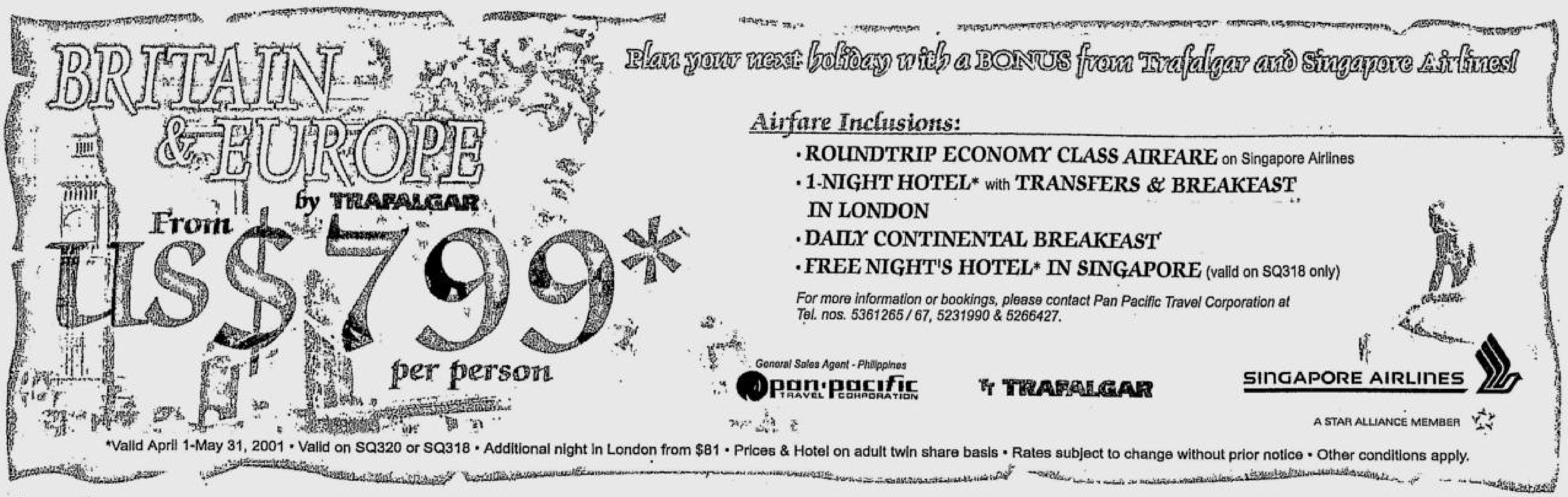

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Gov't seen endorsing proposal of small firm to run Nat'l Steel

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE MACAPAGAL administration is poised to endorse a proposal by Allengoal Steel Fabrication Trading Co. to lease, operate and maintain the shuttered steel plant of National Steel Corp. in Iligan until creditor-banks have found a long-term investor for the bankrupt firm.

A source said Allengoal's proposal was the most feasible among the offers put on the table by interested buyers and the most responsive to NSC's immediate needs of arresting the deterioration of the plant facilities that have been idled since November 1999.

Allengoal's proposal is apparently being backed by the Malaysian government, which earlier reached a pact with its Philippine counterpart to settle the NSC dilemma immediately and to restore trade relations between the two countries.

Allengoal had already obtained approval for its lease-to-operate plan from the NSC management led by Ibrahim Bidn of Malaysia but this was struck down by its creditor banks and the Securities and Exchange Commission, which has put the company under receivership.

Allengoal's longstanding proposal is to lease (at less than P20 million a month) the NSC facilities for at least two years and rehabilitate and operate the steel giant's production lines at no cost to the company. The contract can be mutually preterminated if NSC finds a suitable long-term buyer. Allengoal will put up P100 million in cash deposit and performance bond.

Aside from the monthly lease payments, NSC is also given an option to get at least a 40-percent share of the net profits after Allengoal has recovered all its rehabilitation costs, or on the 13th month of the lease agreement, whichever comes first.

The source said the government found the profit-sharing option attractive considering that NSC would be operating without the financial burden of servicing its P16.5 billion in total debts. A profit-sharing option would also boost NSC's chances of getting a long-term investor by proving its continued viability.

However, if the government (which only has a 12.5-percent stake in the company) does endorse Allengoal, it remains to be seen whether creditor-banks would change their skepticism over the obscure company's proposals.

NSC's creditor-banks have belittled Allengoal's capacity to run NSC considering its lack of financial and technical expertise. The company was formed in 1999 as a sole proprietorship by its president Alexander Delmo, a Cagayan de Oro-based businessman engaged in steel processing.

The creditor-banks were also concerned that the contract would give Allengoal an insider's edge over potential investors to NSC and thus prevent NSC from taking in a partner with a longer-term commitment. The banks want a strategic partner, preferably a slab producer, which would infuse additional capital of $600 million to $1 billion into NSC. They also want NSC's P9 billion in debts restructured into 10-year amortizing bonds with the balance to be converted into equity.

In its proposal, Allengoal said a select group of ex-NSC managers would form the core of the management team while Hatch Associates, a North American engineering and consultancy firm, would provide technical and operating expertise. It claimed that it has tapped the financial backing of one of the largest and most liquid banks in the country which it did not identify.

TOTAL PETROLEUM OIL TERMINAL

President Macapagal-Arroyo leads the recent inauguration of the $20-million oil distribution terminal of Total Petroleum Philippines Corp. in Alas-Asin, Mariveles, Bataan. With the President at the unveiling of the ceremonial marker are Jeff Attwood (third from left), president and managing director of TPPC, Energy Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho (partly hidden) and Nigel Pennington (right), chief financial officer, refining and marketing Asia, TotalFinaElf Paris. Sitting on a land area of 9 hectares, the new Total oil distribution terminal is highly automated and has the capacity to store up to 40,000 kiloliters of finished products.

INTERNET NEEDS

INQ7 taps ETPI service

INQ7 Interactive Inc., or INQ7, the joint venture company between the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc. and GMA Network Inc., has tapped the ADSL broadband service of Eastern Telecoms for its Internet requirements.

INQ7 president Dennis Valdes and ETPI chief operating officer Angelo C. Molato signed the agreement.

Eastern Telecoms' asymmetric digital subscriber line (ADSL) service is the first in the market and is currently being used by its top corporate clients. At the height of the impeachment trials and the subsequent People Power earlier this year, Eastern Telecoms provided INQ7.net the medium to constantly update and monitor the INQUIRER website. During this period, the site rose to become the 11th most visited website in the world.

"People from all over the world were focused on what is happening in the Philippines during this period and we have to give them up to last-minute news. The ADSL service of ETPI was critical to the success of this activity as we needed the fastest access speed to deliver information to the rest of the world," said Bobby Gan-tuangco, chief technology officer of INQ7.

According to Joevel E. Rivera, ETPI vice president and Internet business unit head, ADSL allows high-bandwith access to the Internet at speeds of up to 8 megabits per second. It can perform 100 times faster than Internet access via a telephone line using a 56k modem.

ETPI's Molato said "ETPI presently owns the biggest gateway to the Global Internet at 77 Mbps. This is directly connected to Cable & Wireless, AT&T, British Telecoms, UUNET and Pacific Century Cyberworks. We can provide the broadband requirements of INQ7 and top corporations with ease and reliability."

Star TV tops . . .

(From page B4)

PLDT, however, is taking its time choosing the best partner considering that the GMA deal has yet to go through a due-diligence process as well as obtain congressional approval.

The GMA takeover is part of the PLDT group's bid to boost its multimedia concerns and implement its convergence strategy of developing and delivering content over different media platforms.

The source said that among the serious parties keen on the deal was Star TV, Asia's leading multi-platform content and service provider with more than 300 million viewers across 53 Asian countries. It has 30 channels which include Star Plus, Star World, Channel [V], ESPN. Star Sports, Star Movies, Star Gold, Viva Cinema, and Star News.

The pan-Asian satellite broadcaster has been aggressively creating the next generation of media connectivity in Asia: from the production and distribution of television channels to the development of enhanced television, from film production to radio content, from investing in cable infrastructure to partnerships with Internet companies. Star TV has also been on a recent investment spree in the region, including its alliance with Taiwanese interest provider GigaMedia and its purchase of a stake in India's Hathaway Cable and Datacom Private, which owns the country's second largest cable network.

Star TV's rival, Pacific Cyberworks, has likewise expressed interest in the PLDT-GMA deal. It is also expanding aggressively in Asia and its convergence strategy parallels PLDT's current thrust under Pangilinan.

Another interested party is CanWest, which owns Canada's biggest broadcasting network Global Television and Canada's largest daily newspaper publisher. The company is on an expansion mode internationally as it has acquired substantial interests in TV stations in New Zealand, Australia, Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Sony, which own the SET and AXN channels, is also looking at GMA as part of its move to form strategic broadcast alliances in the region.

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Club Filipino	330,000	
Eagleridge	450,000	425,000
Evercrest	130,000	110,000
Filipinas Golf	350,000	300,000
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Fontana D	90,000	-
Forest Hills A	260,000	Pls. Call
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Manila Southwoods A	850,000	800,000
Manila Southwoods B	950,000	900,000
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GG & A Club Shares

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Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	2,000,000	-
Baguio Country Club	600,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	-	110,000
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	150,000
Camp John Hay	310,000	375,000
Canlubang	850,000	1,000,000
Canyonwoods	-	350,000
Capitol Hills	125,000	140,000
Cebu Country Club	2,000,000	2,200,000
Celebrity Sports Club	200,000	220,000
Club Filipino	250,000	300,000
Eagle Ridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Eastridge "A"	-	200,000
Evercrest "A"	110,000	130,000
Forest Hills "A"	-	265,000
Forest Hills "B"	-	280,000
Forest Hills "C"	-	450,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	400,000	425,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	-	500,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	16,000,000	17,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	15,000,000
Manila Polo	4,000,000	-
Manila Southwoods "A"	800,000	850,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	900,000	1,000,000
Metropolitan Club "A"	180,000	200,000
Metropolitan Club "B"		230,000
Mimosa Golf & Country Club (Ind./Corp.)	Please Call	Please Call
Montemar (Ind.)	-	40,000
Mt. Malarayat	-	400,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	310,000	350,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	380,000	400,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	550,000	-
Philippine Columbian	-	85,000
Pueblo de Oro "A"/"B"/"C"	-	Please Call
Puerto Azul	170,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	230,000	250,000
Riviera Golf & Country Club "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Royale Tagaytay "A/B/C"	Please Call	Please Call
Sherwood Hills "A"	-	250,000
Sta. Elena "A"	-	2,100,000
Sta. Elena "B"	2,200,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corp.)	400,000	550,000
Subic Bay Yacht (Ind.)	-	350,000
Tagaytay Country Club	430,000	480,000
Tagaytay Highlands	-	1,200,000
Tagaytay Midlands	-	880,000
Valle Verde (Ind)	200,000	220,000
Valley Golf	-	350,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	10,000,000	-

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(Available Lessors)

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Eagleridge	30,000	Sta. Elena	70,000
Eastridge "A"	20,000	Tagaytay CC	30,000
Forest Hills	30,000	Tagaytay Golf	65,000
Manila Southwoods	50,000	Tivoli Royale	20,000
Makati Sports "A"	35,000	Valley Golf	20,000
Manila Golf	500,000	Wack-Wack	90,000

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CLUB FILIPINO	340,000
EAGLERIDGE "B"	550,000
EVERCREST "A"	190,000
MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	430,000
MANILA GOLF (INDIV.)	15,500,000
MT MALARAYAT "A"/"C"	.50M/1 1M
ORCHARD "B"/"C"	.60M/0 65M
STA ELENA "A"	2,100,000
SUBIC BAY YACHT (CORP.)	550,000
TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS GOLF	1,150,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	925,000

Share Swapping: Please Call

CLUBS	BID Price
ALABANG "A"/"B"	1.9M/2 0M
BAGUIO CC	810,000
EAGLERIDGE "A"	300,000
EVERCREST "A"	110,000
MANILA GOLF (CORP.)	16,250,000
MANILA POLO CLUB	3,500,000
MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	850,000
METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	150,000
QUEZON CITY SPORTS "A"	225,000
RIVIERA "A"	250,000
STA. ELENA "B"	2,200,000
TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS	870,000
VALLE VERDE	170,000
WACK WACK GOLF	10 000 000

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MANILA SOUTHWOODS "A"	50 000	WACK WACK	100 000

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5	CAMP JOHN HAY GOLF CLUB	500,000 00	350,000 00
6	CELEBRITY SPORTS CLUB	230,000 00	-
7	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	500 000 00	450 000 00
8	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	450 000 00	350,000 00
9	FONTANA RESORT & COUNTRY CLUB	150,000 00	-
10	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	450,000 00	-
11	MANILA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	18,000,000 00	14,500,000 00
12	MANILA POLO CLUB	-	4,000,000 00
13	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	-	800,000 00
14	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB (Individual)	30 000 00	-
15	MONTEMAR BEACH CLUB (Corporate)	50 000 00	
16	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	600 000 00	-
17	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB	150 000 00	130,000 00
18	PHILIPPINE COLUMBIAN ASSOCIATION	95,000 00	-
19	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	250 000 00	240,000 00
20	STA. ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	2,100 000 00	-
21	SHERWOOD HILLS "B"	350 000 00	-
22	TAGAYTAY MIDLANDS GOLF CLUB	870,000 00	-
23	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB (Individual)	-	175,000 00
24	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		300 000 00
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Eagle Ridge C	570 000
Eagle Ridge	220 000
Evercrest	110 000
Fontana	Please call
Forest Hill "A"	260 000
Manila Golf (Indv. & Corp.)	Please call
Manila Polo	Please call
Manila Southwoods "A"	830 000
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Mimosa	Please call
Orchard "A"	320 000
Punta Fuego	Please call
Riviera "A"	275 000
Riviera "B"	350 000
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Royale Tagaytay with/without lot	Please call
Sta. Elena A	2 100 000
Sherwood A,B,C	Please call
Subic	Please call
Tagaytay Midlands	560 000
Tagaytay Highland Golf	1,100 000
Valley Golf	350 000
Wack Wack	Please call

SELLING

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Alabang B	Please call
Baguio Country Club	850 000
Calatagan A	Please call
Camp John Hay Golf	340 000
Capitol Hills	130 000
Celebrity	210 000
Club Filipino	Please call
Forest Hills "A"	260 000
Forest Hills "C"	Please call
Manila Golf (Indv)	14 450 000
Manila Polo	4 000 000
Manila Southwoods "B"	1 000 000
Makati Sports "B"	450 000
Montemar	30 000
Mt. Malarayat A/B	Pls. call
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1	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "A"		1.900 000
2	ALABANG COUNTRY CLUB "B"		2.000 000
3	BAGUIO COUNTRY CLUB	850.000	750 000
4	CALATAGAN GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	150 000	100.000
5	CAMP JOHN HAY	400 000	320 000
6	CANLUBANG GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		850.000
7	CAPITOL HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		125 000
8	CELEBRITY CLUB	210 000	200.000
9	COUNTRY CLUB AT TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS	490,000	450 000
10	CLUB FILIPINO	330 000	300 000
11	EASTRIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"	250.000	220 000
12	EAGLERIDGE GOLF CLUB "A"		400.000
13	EVERCREST GOLF CLUB "A"	130,000	100 000
14	FAIRWAYS & BLUEWATER	Pls Call	Pls Call
15	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	300 000	260,000
16	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	550 000	
17	FOREST HILLS GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600 000	
18	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "A"	450 000	400.000
19	MAKATI SPORTS CLUB "B"	500 000	450.000
20	MANILA GOLF CLUB (IND.)	15.500 000	
21	MANILA POLO CLUB		3,500,000
22	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "A"	850 000	
23	MANILA SOUTHWOODS GOLF CLUB "B"	1,000 000	900,000
24	MANILA YACHT CLUB	650 000	
25	METROPOLITAN CLUB "A"	180 000	
26	METROPOLITAN CLUB "B"	200 000	
27	MT MALARAYAT GOLF CLUB (IND)	500 000	400.000
28	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	Pls Call	280 000
29	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "B"	Pls Call	400 000
30	ORCHARD GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	Pls Call	600.000
31	PUERTO AZUL BEACH CLUB "B"		130.000
32	QUEZON CITY SPORTS CLUB	240.000	
33	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "A"	200 000	
34	RIVIERA GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB "C"	600 000	500 000
35	ROYAL NORTHWOODS	Pls Call	Pls Call
36	STA ELENA GOLF CLUB "A"	2,200 000	2,000,000
37	SUBIC BAY YACHT CLUB (IND)	500 000	
38	TAGAYTAY HIGHLANDS INT'L GOLF CLUB	1,100 000	
39	TAGAYTAY MIDLAND	900 000	
40	VALLE VERDE COUNTRY CLUB		175,000
41	VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB	350,000	
42	WACK WACK GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB		9,500,000

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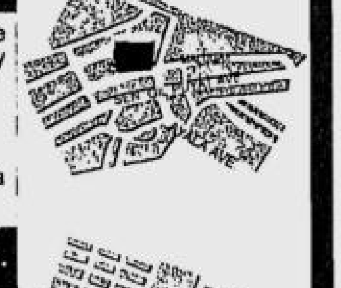
PROPERTIES FOR SALE

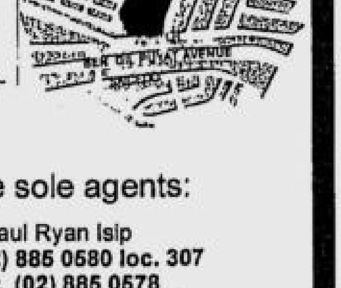
Ayala - Malugay Property 8,056 sq.m.

The land is strategically located within close proximity to Ayala Avenue extension and Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue intersection. Based on preliminary studies, we believe the site to be ideally suitable for:
Business hotel and serviced apartments
Residential condominium
Office - Grade 'B'
Improvements on the property include five semi-concrete buildings with a gross floor area of 4,182 sq.m. No current height restrictions applicable.



Sen. Gil Puyat - Jupiter Exchange 35,037 sq.m.

The property comprises a large site of about 3.5 hectares well located near the financial, residential and entertainment districts of Makati. We believe the site is ideally suitable for:
Retail establishments
Office - Grade 'B'
rovements on the property include a 2-level semi-concrete office-ouse/shop bordered by a concrete fence.
Area Ratio (FAR): 5



For more information, please contact the sole agents:

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dleechiu@fpdsavills.com.ph

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ALI to raise ₱600M from Magallanes project

By Doris C. Dumlao

PREMIER property developer Ayala Land Inc. aims to raise up to P600 million this year from the sale of residential and commercial lots in the mixed-use Magallanes complex in Makati.

ALI vice president for sales and marketing Victoria Añonuevo said the company was set to receive this week the license to sell lots in the five-hectare complex, to be relaunched as Puerto de Magallanes.

"It's a big redevelopment project. We are disposing of these lots," she said.

Añonuevo said no rental income was expected from the redevelopment as the intention was to sell the lots.

For this year, she said sales revenue would likely hit P500 million to P600 million based on indications of strong appetite on the project.

She said there would be 48 residential and 21 commercial lots up for grabs at the Paseo de Magallanes project. Of the 21 units available for commercial use, she said half would likely be sold in the next few months.

For the residential lots, Añonuevo estimated the market value at P53,000 per square meter.

Some P2.6 billion has been earmarked for ALI's capital expenditures this year as the company continues to explore untapped markets in the real estate sector.

During the first quarter of the year, ALI was estimated to have earned P520 million in net income, 19 percent lower than the level posted in the same period last year amid the political crisis, which had led to the ouster of then President Estrada.

"We are capitalizing on growing consumer spending trends, with the creation and expansion of shopping centers. One example is our successful bid for the long-term lease on a 9.4-hectare property along C5 at the eastern edge of Fort Bonifacio. We plan to develop this property primarily as a regional value center," ALI president Francisco Licuanan II said during the stockholders' meeting last week.

Licuanan also noted that ALI was on the lookout for pieces of property that meet its strategic objectives. As of end-2000, it had a landbank of nearly 4,000 hectares, with a large portion in the Laguna-Cavite area to form Ayala South. But he said landbank assets not found to be necessary to our evolving strategies were being sold to help improve the company's return-on-assets.

The local stock market has looked favorably at ALI shares following positive developments in its most recent real estate projects, including high-rise residential area One Roxas Triangle and townhouse development Montgomery Place in New Manila which both recorded brisk sales this year.

Meanwhile, ALI is also spearheading the creation of another business-to-business (B2B) portal devoted to construction and real estate. Licuanan II said a deal was in the works with six other big real estate and construction groups in the country to put up the new B2B vertical portal this year.

Megaworld listed among Asia's best managed

MEGAWORLD Corp. has been named one of the "Best Managed Companies of 2001" in a poll conducted early this year by the Hong Kong-based Finance Asia magazine.

Megaworld was cited as one of Asia's best-performing companies in the areas of management, investor relations and commitment to shareholder value.

Fund managers, analysts and institutional investors from Asia, Europe and the United States participated in the poll, reportedly the most extensive of its kind ever done in the region.

One of the most successful and financially strong local real estate-based companies, Megaworld registered a stockholders' equity of almost P15 billion at the end of the third quarter of 2000, compared with P1.5 billion in 1994 when it became a publicly listed company. Even during the crisis years of 1997 and 1998, with the property sector dragged down by the economic turmoil, the company continued to chart a growth course in the industry.

Emerging even stronger from the Asian crisis, the Megaworld group is now an acknowledged leader in residential development in Metro Manila. Since 1994, the Megaworld group has completed a total of 35 projects. It currently has 15 ongoing projects in various stages of completion.

In December 1999, Megaworld bolstered its reputation for quality by becoming the country's first ISO 9001-certified property company.

Megaworld pioneered in information technology-based property development through its Eastwood City CyberPark in Quezon City, now a model for other IT parks in the region. The CyberPark targets 17,000 jobs for a local pool of IT and computer professionals and P50 billion in export revenues by 2005. It now hosts more than 30 IT firms and a 5,500-strong workforce expected to double by yearend at its anchor office towers, IBM Plaza, Citibank Square and Eastwood Incubation Center.

The CyberPark will also be home to Customer Contact Center, a state-of-the-art call center majority owned by the Lopez group, which forecasts export earnings of $29.472 million annually and employment for more than 2,000 workers.

A key CyberPark support facility set to open this June is the International Center for Information Technology Education (ICITE). The ICITE will supply the IT manpower requirements of CyberPark locators, besides serving as an IT research and development center in the region.

Aside from the Philippines, the Finance Asia poll focused on the best-managed companies in China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan and Thailand. Finance Asia is the most widely read financial publication in Asia, according to a survey conducted in September and October last year among leading banks and investment companies in the region.

LBC network gets 'connected'

LBC, the country's biggest courier service, has completed the first phase of its five-year, P300-million IT-infrastructure project.

The venture will tap into the fast-growing WAP and PC-based e-commerce market, eventually providing LBC with the largest IT infrastructure network in the Philippines.

"The network will provide real-time 'track and trace' for both our corporate and individual customers. To maximize all our 477 offices, we will also be able to offer other services aside from our courier service. We want to introduce more Internet, communication, and financial service—all these require networks," LBC senior vice president Santi Araneta said.

Partners of LBC in the project are three industry leaders—Globe Telecoms, Hewlett Packard and 3Com. "We tapped into Globe because of their infrastructure, HP for the services, and 3Com for their communications devices," according to LBC IT director Eduardo Cajigal, who played a key role in the project's strategy development.

Globe is a full service telecommunications company with an existing nationwide network based on fiber optic and digital microwave technology, with complementing satellite facilities to reach even remote areas. HP is a leading manufacturer of computing and communications products. It will supply the project's hardware requirements, specifically server demands. 3Com offers a wide range of data networking platforms for Web-enabled solutions.

The first phase was completed on March 1 when 12 nodes or communication points, servicing the high-density Luzon delivery destinations, were deployed. By August this year, another 24 nodes will be installed, bringing the total to 36 area codes where LBC is represented.

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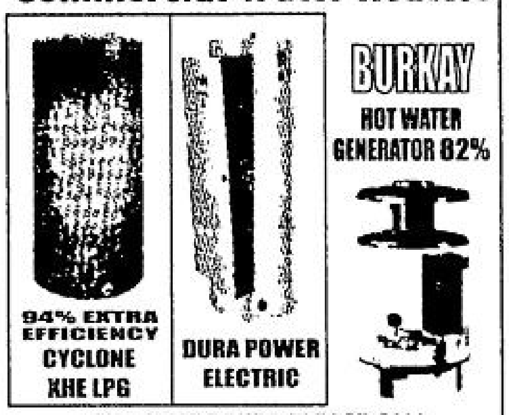

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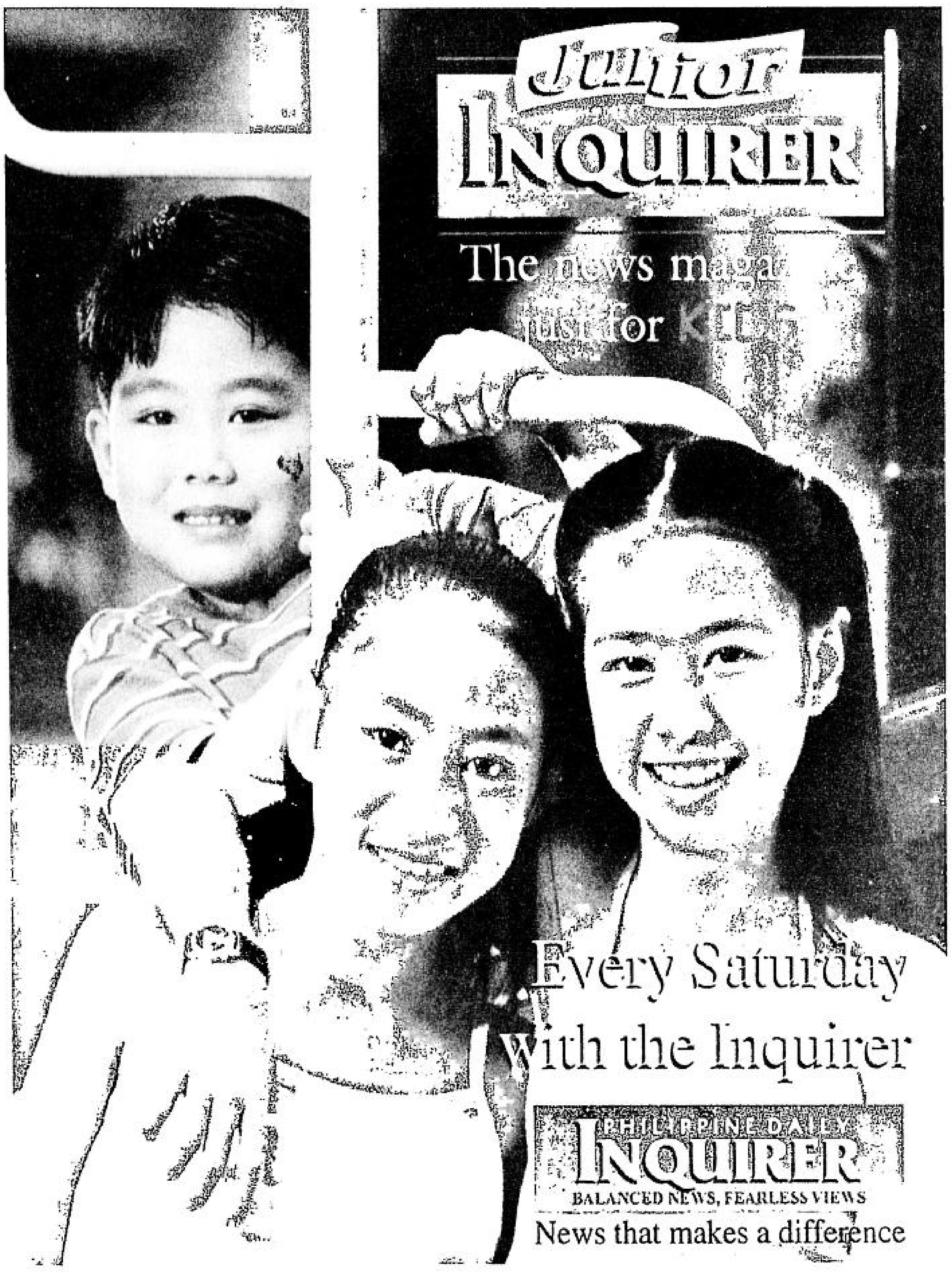

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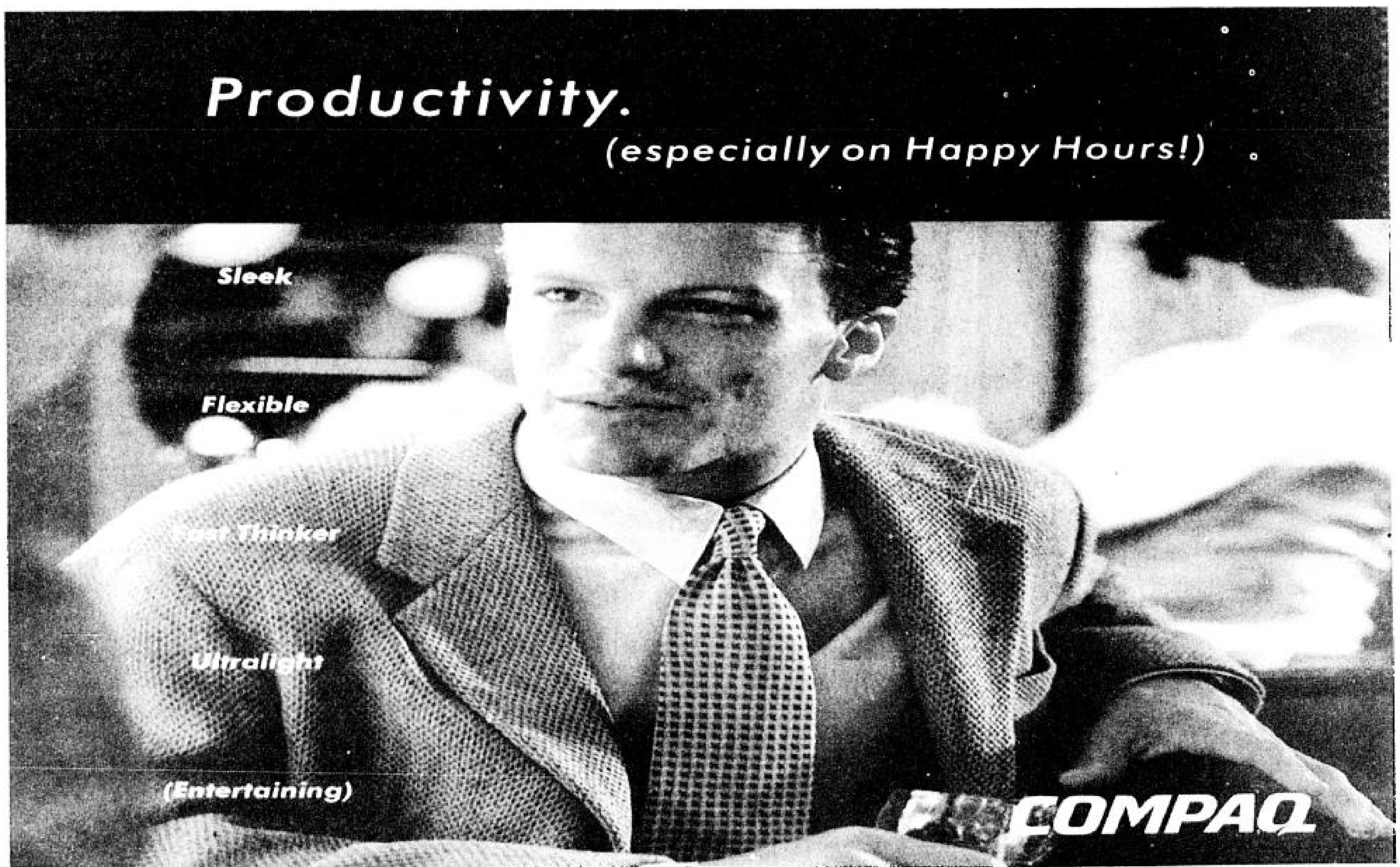

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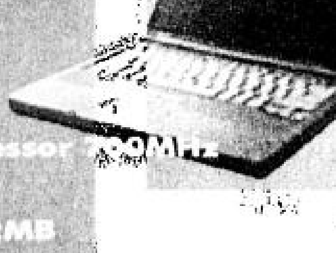

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Bargain-hunting seen to lift some issues in sluggish trade

By Doris C. Dumlao

LOCAL stocks are expected to move sideways this week as the oversold market, which failed to get relief from the surprise US and local interest rate cuts last week, tries to muster some strength toward a technical rebound.

MARKET PLAY

Analysts said bargain-hunting might perk up selective stocks, but the lethargic market still lacked incentive to ride on the gains posted by the US and Asian markets last week.

"Bargain hunters are expected to continue to pick up selected issues. We expect issues which have indicated favorable profit prospects for 2001 to benefit from this buying support. Other issues which have also been heavily sold down as well as orphans are also expected to move on bargain-hunting," BPI Securities analyst Spencer Yap said.

"The release of first quarter results will continue to have an impact on specific issues. The lack of broad-based support, however, should cap the market's rise as a whole. Selective accumulation is warranted," Yap said.

Despite the recovery of the US stock market last week, the 33-share Philippine Stock Exchange composite index (Phisix) dropped week-on-week by 16.72 points or 1.16 percent to close at 1,428.54.

Corporate worry

On the corporate side, investors aired concern on the financial footing of various subsidiaries of the Lopez conglomerate, particularly the water and telecommunications units, as well as on the shareholder conflicts within Equitable PCI Bank.

Yap noted that share prices of Benpres Corp., ABS CBN Broadcasting Corp., and Meralco all fell to historic lows in the last weeks, although bargain-hunting toward the end of the week managed to lift prices above intra-week bottoms.

On the other hand, he noted that first quarter results were mixed with Filinvest Land, Bank of the Philippine Islands, and Pure Foods Corp. showing growth in bottom line results. However, Ayala Land Inc. and Piltel were expected to post flat growth.

BPI Securities technical analyst Roberto Cano said the Phisix formed another possible hammer (bullish) pattern last week but such a bullish pattern has yet to be confirmed.

"The hammer pattern needs to be confirmed by closing higher (this) week accompanied by strong volume. Technical indicators based on the relative strength index (RSI) and moving average convergence-divergence (MACD) show consolidation. The RSI and MACD-histogram also showed a bullish divergence is forming; this supports a bullish outlook and indicates that a technical rebound may be near. However, if this support fails to hold we would likely see the next supports at 1400 and 1370," Cano said.

PCCI Securities head of research Gonzalo Bongolan said there was no guarantee of reversal even if the market was oversold.

"Sideways with upward bias has given way to sideways, period. A no-confidence sentiment has taken hold, making it prudent to just play the horizontal trading band—picking up at the dip and selling as the ceiling is reached as we have been delinked from main markets for the time being," Bongolan said.

Opportunities

"The surprise US rate cut and the automatic domestic counterpart is not seen to amount to much activity in equities, except in the fixed income and foreign exchange markets. The interest rate reduction and recovery of the Nasdaq present trading opportunities in select property and IT counters," Bongolan said.

Web-based Philstocks.net, on the other, said that technically, the market appeared bound for more sideways trading in the coming days, noting that the Phisix has been testing 1,400 last week. If such support is breached, the next support level is placed at 1,370.

"Hopefully, some bargain-hunting will keep the main index above the psychological level. Considering that the market has gone down a lot in the past year, share prices have a better chance of moving higher over the next few weeks or months than going lower. The market appears to have already discounted so much bad news and if that is true and things don't get worse, we've probably seen a near-term bottom," Philstocks.net said.

It explained that political and economic obstacles continued to make the market vulnerable to losses and volatility.

"The first two quarters are likely to be bumpy with earnings remaining weak while the economic prospects remain uncertain. We can't expect the market to make much progress until the economic outlook becomes clearer. We realize that the current environment is not exactly ideal to buy aggressively," it said.

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DISCLOSURES

ELECTED to the board of Union Cement Corp. were Ramon del Rosario, Oscar Hilado, Magdaleno Albarracin Jr., Alfred Schmid, Paul Hunziker, Kikuo Koshida, Peter Assam, Brigitte Nielsen, Jose Cuisia Jr., Jorge de Leon, Ramon del Rosario Jr., Victor del Rosario, Noel Vasquez and Francisco Viray

* * *

ELECTED to the board of Bacnotan Consolidated Industries Inc. were Ramon del Rosario, Oscar Hilado, Magdaleno Albarracin Jr., Urs Bieri, Jose Cuisia Jr., Jeremy Maycock, Jorge de Leon, Ramon del Rosario Jr., Victor del Rosario, Noel Vasquez and Felipe Alfonso.

* * *

CITYLAND Development Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 5 with record date set for May 6.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of **Bank of the Philippine Islands** were Jaime Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Gerardo Ablaza Jr., Manuel Bengson, Octavio Espiritu, Ariston Estrada Jr., Rebecca Fernando, Haruo Kawamoto, Sadao Kobayashi, Xavier Loinaz, Mercedita Nolledo, Philippe Pallart, Jackson Peter Tai, Frank Kwong Shing Wong and Fernando Zobel de Ayala.

* * *

JG Summit Holdings Inc. disclosed that its wholly owned subsidiary, **Express Holdings Inc.**, purchased additional 17.29 million shares of **Universal Robina Corp.** at P4.40 per share.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of **PCI Leasing and Finance Inc.** were Edilberto Javier, Antonio Go, Rene Buenaventura, Romuald Dy Tang, Oscar Lopez-Dee, Jonathan Go, Roberto Malonzo, Ferdinand Martin Romualdez, Horacio Templo, Wilfrido Vergara, Walter Wassmer, Antonio Cotoco, Vitaliano Nañagas II, Jose Pastor Puno and Arthur Soberano.

* * *

LA TONDEÑA will hold an investor's briefing on April 24, 2 p.m. at the Executive Dining Room of San Miguel Corp. head office in Mandaluyong.

* * *

FORTUNE Cement Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on June 6 with record date set for May 8.

* * *

ELECTED to the board of **A. Soriano Corp.** were Andres Soriano III, Eduardo Soriano, Enrique Razon Jr., John Gokongwei Jr., Oscar Hilado, Raymundo Pe, Paul Lawrence, Antonio Roxas and Roberto Romulo.

* * *

ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 24, 8 a.m. at Studio 1, ABS-CBN Broadcast Center Complex, Quezon City. Only stockholders as of April 16 are entitled to notice of and to vote at the meeting. ***Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research***

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BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	5.9	5.9	5.9	5.9	5,000
Banco Filipino Sav & Mort	100	100	100	100	300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	70.5	72.5	70.5	72	756,400
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	43.5	42.5	43.5	49,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	210	212	207	208	72,560
Prudential Bank	500	500	500	500	8,360
FINANCIAL SERVICE					
Bankard Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.46	1.46	277,000
Filipino Fund Inc.	0.4	0.48	0.4	0.48	20,000
First Metro Invest. Corp.	220	220	220	220	300
Manulife Financial Corp.	1265	1270	1265	1265	5,360
Sun Life Financial Serv.	970	1005	970	1005	15,970
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	38.5	38.5	38	38.5	15,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.41	1,880,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	655	690	655	690	640
Piltel	0.52	0.52	0.5	0.5	650,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	700	700	680	690	110,360
Philweb.Com Inc.	0.048	0.048	0.046	0.047	97,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	40	41	40	41	9,100
Manila Electric Co. B	54.5	55	53.5	55	823,000
Petron Corp.	1.88	1.88	1.86	1.86	1,962,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	0.9	0.94	0.9	0.94	70,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	9,446,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	1.22	1.3	1.22	1.3	8,287,000
Negros Navigation Co. Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	30,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	20,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Jollibee Foods Corp.	12.75	13	12.75	13	266,500
La Tondena Distillers Inc.	30	30	30	30	471,000
Pure Foods Corp. A	95	95	95	95	3,000
RFM Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.9	0.9	2,150,000
San Miguel Corp. A	46	46.5	46	46.5	12,700
San Miguel Corp. B	50.5	50.5	50.5	50.5	22,200
Vitarich Corp.	0.49	0.49	0.49	0.49	310,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	7.5	7.6	7.4	7.6	2,862,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	1.2	1.22	1.2	1.22	2,890,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	12.25	12.25	12	12.25	1,100
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.8	0.75	0.8	90,000
APC Group Inc.	0.18	0.22	0.18	0.21	1,440,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	20,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.52	1.52	1.44	1.48	5,978,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	2,400,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	470,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	22	22.5	22	22.25	38,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	30,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	120,000
Ionics Inc.	12.25	13.5	12.25	13.25	80,300
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.86	1.9	1.86	1.9	14,773,000
Megaworld Corp.	0.71	0.73	0.71	0.73	710,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.47	0.48	0.47	0.48	260,000
Philtread Holdings Corp.	4	4	4	4	20,000
Philtread Hdgs. Corp. B	4	4	4	4	10,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	3,400,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	10,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	950,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.25	0.27	0.25	0.27	740,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Metro Alliance Holdings	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	140,000
Music Corp.	2.5	2.55	2.5	2.55	86,000
Pryce Corp.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	200,000
Central Azucar Don Pedro	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	40,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	13	13.5	13	13.5	225,800
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICE					
Belle Corp	0.51	0.58	0.51	0.58	10,310,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc	0.49	0.55	0.49	0.54	1,630,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.46	0.53	0.46	0.53	150,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.23	0.26	0.23	0.26	630,000
Philippine Racing Club	4	4	4	4	36,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	38	38	38	38	361,000
Equitable PCI Bank-War	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	685,000
Jollibee Warrants	12.25	12.25	12.25	12.25	20,000
Omico Corp. Warrant	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	10,000,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	700
Waterfront Phils-Warrant	0.001	0.001	0.001	0.001	3,000,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.5	5.5	5.4	5.5	1,386,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	220,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	550,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.31	0.33	1,880,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	2	2	1.9	2	10,681,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	10,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.11	0.11	0.11	0.11	350,000
SM Development Corp.	0.78	0.8	0.78	0.8	50,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,831,000
Universal Rightfield Prop	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.09	4,100,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	3,000,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	140,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	200,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	1,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	0.0038	5,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	500,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.18	0.18	0.175	0.175	560,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	0.0042	3,000,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	200,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.08	0.095	0.08	0.095	1,600,000
South China Resources Inc	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	20,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	400,000

	SHARES	VALUE (P)
Banks & Fin Svc	1,210,550	98,822,180.00
Comm'l & Ind'l	188,366,600	268,917,475.00
PRO	21,058,000	42,379,400.00
Mining	10,400,000	288,850.00
OIL	15,220,000	268,200.00
GRAND TOTALS :	236,255,150	410,676,105.00

AVERAGES		
Banks & Fin Svc	585.99	DOWN 0.13
Comm'l & Ind'l	1,954.56	UP 12.73
PRO	558.23	DOWN 0.26
Mining	1,103.54	UP 7.83
OIL	1.52	DOWN 0.04
All Shares Index	740.36	UP 6.74
Composite	1,428.54	DOWN 0.33

NO. OF ADVANCES: 27; NO. OF DECLINES: 27; NO. OF UNCHANGED: 40;
NO. OF TRADED ISSUES: 94; NO. OF TRADES: 2,393

CURRENCIES

Apr. 20, 2001

Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Foreign currency in US$	Foreign currency in Peso
United States	Dollar	1.114454	1.000000	50.0540
Japan	Yen	0.009202	0.008257	0.4103
United Kingdom	Pound	1.612504	1.446900	72.4231
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.142899	0.128223	6.4181
Switzerland	Franc	0.654022	0.586854	29.3744
Canada	Dollar	0.719374	0.645494	32.3096
Singapore	Dollar	0.616914	0.553557	27.7077
Australia	Dollar	0.561014	0.503398	25.1971
Bahrain	Dinar	2.956270	2.652661	132.7763
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.297156	0.266638	13.3463
Brunei	Dollar	0.617427	0.554017	27.7308
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000100	0.000090	0.0045
Thailand	Baht	0.024585	0.022060	1.1042
UAE	Dirham	0.303435	0.272272	13.6283
Korea	Won	0.000858	0.000770	0.0385
Euro	Euro	1.000000	0.897300	44.9135
Germany	Mark	0.511292	0.458782	22.9639
France	Franc	0.152450	0.136793	6.8470
Netherlands	Guilder	0.453780	0.407177	20.3808
Austria	Schilling	0.072672	0.065209	3.2640
Belgium	Franc	0.024789	0.022243	1.1134
Italy	Lire	0.000516	0.000463	0.0232
Finland	Markka	0.168188	0.150915	7.5539
Portugal	Escudo	0.004988	0.004476	0.2240
Spain	Peseta	0.006010	0.005393	0.2699
Luxemburg	Franc	0.024789	0.022243	1.1134
Ireland	Punt	1.269738	1.139336	57.0283

Bangko Sentral seen keeping loan rates at current levels

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE POLICY-MAKING Monetary Board of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas is not poised to bring down its overnight interest rates any further unless the US Federal Reserve cuts its rates again by half-percentage point in May.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura, who also chairs the Monetary Board, said prevailing central bank rates were low enough and could be kept steady for a good part of the year.

"The rates are low enough and we may keep them stable for quite a while, unless the US Fed cuts rates again in May by 50 basis points as some analysts are saying," he said.

Last Friday, the BSP matched the reduction in US short-term interest rates and brought overnight borrowing from banks down to 9.5 percent while overnight lending was also reduced to 11.75 percent.

Still, Buenaventura said he believed that the BSP's rates cut would have a positive impact on Treasury bill yields in today's auction. Securities dealers said they were confident the 91-day Treasury bill rate, the government's benchmark borrowing rate, would slide back to single-digit levels today.

Analysts are expecting yields of Treasury bills to go down by 20 to 30 basis points today as the market digests the unexpected reduction in both the US and the BSP's rates by half-a-percentage point late last week.

"Because of our rates cut, T-bill rates, particularly the longer tenors, would correct," Buenaventura said.

National Treasurer Sergio Edeza agreed that there was no other way but for the government's benchmark borrowing rate to move down this week back to single-digit levels from 10.027 percent last week.

Longer tenor instruments like the six-month and one-year Treasury bills that fetched 11.005 percent and 11.638 percent, respectively, last week are seen to move much lower than the benchmark rate.

"The market should bid lower in today's auction. We want to see lower interest rates help perk up economic development, revive economic activities, and for businesses to have access to credit at lower (cost)," Edeza said.

Rates of treasury bills normally track the movement of the BSP's overnight rates. The 91-day treasury bill rate is used by banks as basis in pricing their loans.

Yields on treasury bills rose for three consecutive weeks previously as the financial markets harbored the impression that the government would start borrowing aggressively from the private sector to help cover a widening deficit.

The government had announced two weeks ago that it sustained a deficit of P38.913 billion as of end-March, or 79 percent more compared to a P21.686-billion deficit in the first quarter last year.

This number, however, was 25 percent lower than the programmed budget gap of P48.55 billion for the first three months of the year.

"We have enough funds. We have raised cash from the tap facility last month. The market should not worry about the P38 billion because expenditures are lower. They should not be worried that the government may need higher financing," Edeza assured.

PHILIPPINE BANKING

Did you know?

...that for more than 100 years starting the 18th century, the cultivation and sale of tobacco in the Philippine islands was the exclusive prerogative of the Spanish colonial government?

...that in Luzon, the government restricted the growing of tobacco to designated areas such as the Cagayan Valley and Nueva Ecija?

...that in the spirit of liberalism, the government abolished this monopolistic control in 1882?

...that after the lifting of the restrictions on tobacco, private investors like the *Compañia General de Tabacos de Filipinas* (or *Tabacalera* for short) assumed greater involvement in the business?

...that *Tabacalera* became one of the long-time clients of *El Banco Español Filipino*, the first bank to be established in the Philippines and Southeast Asia?

150...

BPI, partner to 'securitize' ₱1-B mortgages

By Elena R. Torrijos

BANK of the Philippine Islands plans to securitize within the next six months P500 million to P1 billion of home mortgages of its thrift bank as well as receivables of property developer Ayala Land Inc.

In an interview, BPI president Xavier Loinaz said the planned securitization would be made in cooperation with its strategic partner, publicly listed Development Bank of Singapore, one of Southeast Asia's biggest banks.

"They're doing it (securitization) in Singapore. They do have a lot of these kinds of things so it's more on the technology side, the backroom, the processing, the structure, those are the kinds of things we want to learn from them," Loinaz said.

DBS has a little over 20-percent stake in BPI, the country's second largest lender.

Loinaz also said the bank was considering participating in the government's scheme to securitize the very large loan portfolio of the state-owned Home Mutual Development Fund or Pag-Ibig, which provides loans to members for the purchase of low-cost housing units.

Securitization refers to the creation of financial instruments backed by a pool of assets, usually trade receivables and mortgages, for sale. These "asset-backed securities" are a potentially important way to help meet the funding needs of the Philippine economy by providing a link between capital markets and consumers of credit.

Last week, BPI reported that its profit for the first quarter of the year nearly doubled to P2.1 billion from P1.1 billion in the same period last year.

In a briefing with reporters following the bank's annual stockholders meeting Thursday, Loinaz said that the first quarter profit should be indicative of the bank's performance for the rest of the year.

BSP wants Equitable to raise more equity

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas wants Equitable PCI Bank to raise not just P10 billion, but P15 billion in fresh capital within the second quarter to aid the lender's recovery.

BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the ideal level of infusion into Equitable PCI was P15 billion, although he acknowledged that a P10-billion fresh capital could be acceptable.

"They have to raise about P15 billion in new capital. If the board says P10 billion is enough then we would accept it. But P15 billion is better," the BSP chief said.

Equitable PCI earlier said it only needed P5 billion to P10 billion in new capital to strengthen the bank.

A capital infusion that Equitable PCI had preferred to raise from existing shareholders after its board of directors rejected proposals of three potential investors is a must before the BSP would agree to restructure its exposure in the bank.

Buenaventura explained that a fresh capital would allow Equitable PCI Bank to become profitable again after its financial health was battered by heavy withdrawals from late last year to early this year.

The BSP chief clarified that the capital build-up was not for Equitable PCI to comply with the central bank's requirements on capital adequacy ratio. "Their problem is profitability and not just capital adequacy," he said.

Equitable PCI officials, however, acknowledged that the money must come in before July when the BSP is scheduled to implement a stricter capital-to-risks requirements.

The fresh infusion, Buenaventura said, was a condition to be imposed by the BSP's Monetary Board before it would agree to restructure the unpaid portion of Equitable PCI's P30-billion emergency loan.

"We told them we would like to see the final capital infusion plan and the final line-up of the bank's board of directors before we would agree to restructure, "the BSP chief said.

What could snag the planned capital build-up program for Equitable PCI is the decision of the Government Service and Insurance System not to participate if the Go family would not put in money.

GSIS president and general manager Winston Garcia has accused the Go family of wanting to control the bank via "a free ride with the pension funds." The Social Security System, however, has vowed to continue helping the bank.

Buenaventura said he was confident the state-owned pension funds, with a combined 37-percent equity in the bank, would move to preserve their investments.

"Our concern is that new money should come in, regardless of who puts it. The bank's problem is that its profitability was affected after the heavy withdrawals because they lost cheap deposits," the BSP chief said.

The country's third largest lender was forced to borrow as much as P30 billion from the BSP's reverse repurchase and emergency facilities to finance heavy withdrawals from late last year to early this year after it was dragged into the "Juetengate" scandal.

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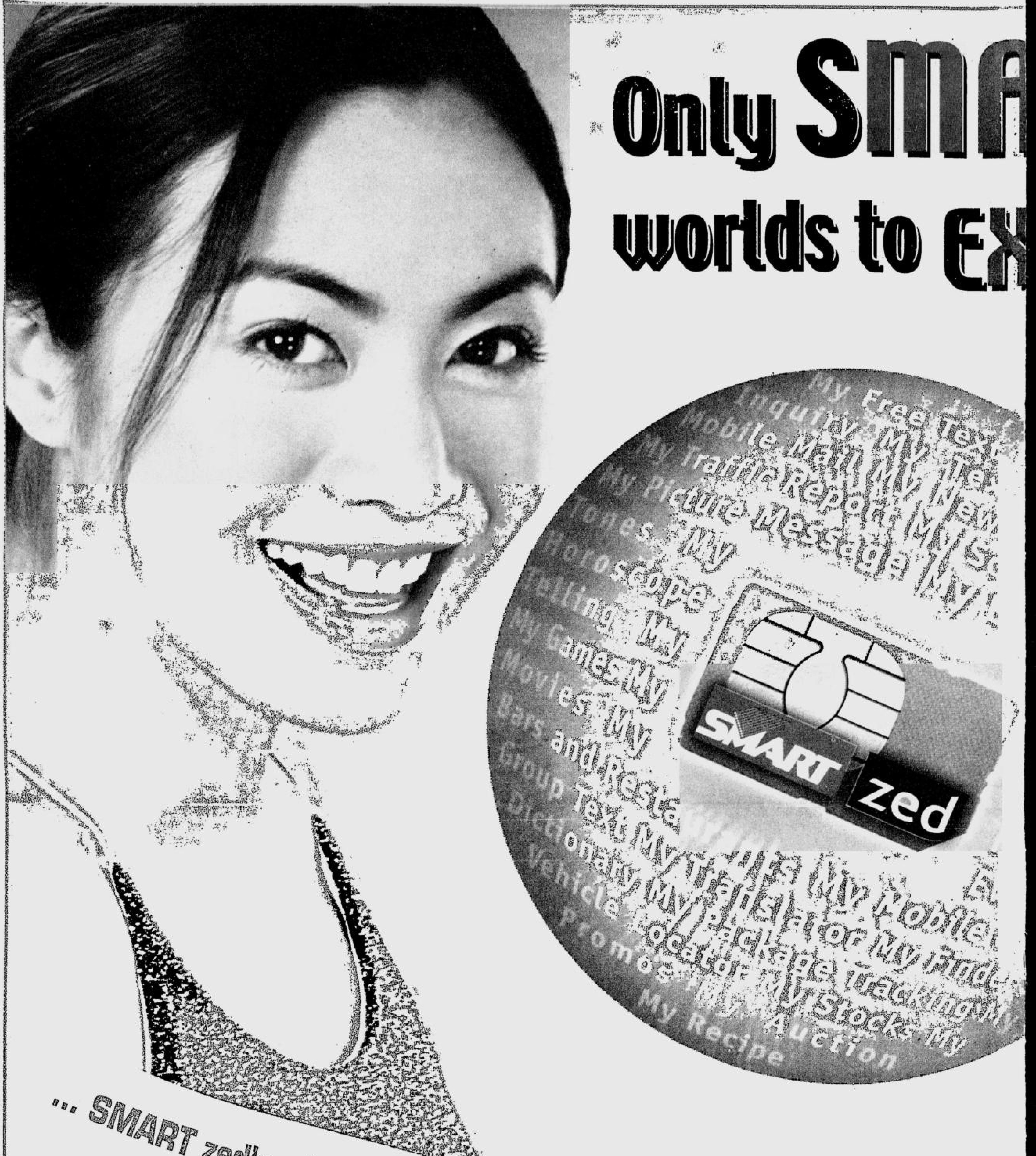
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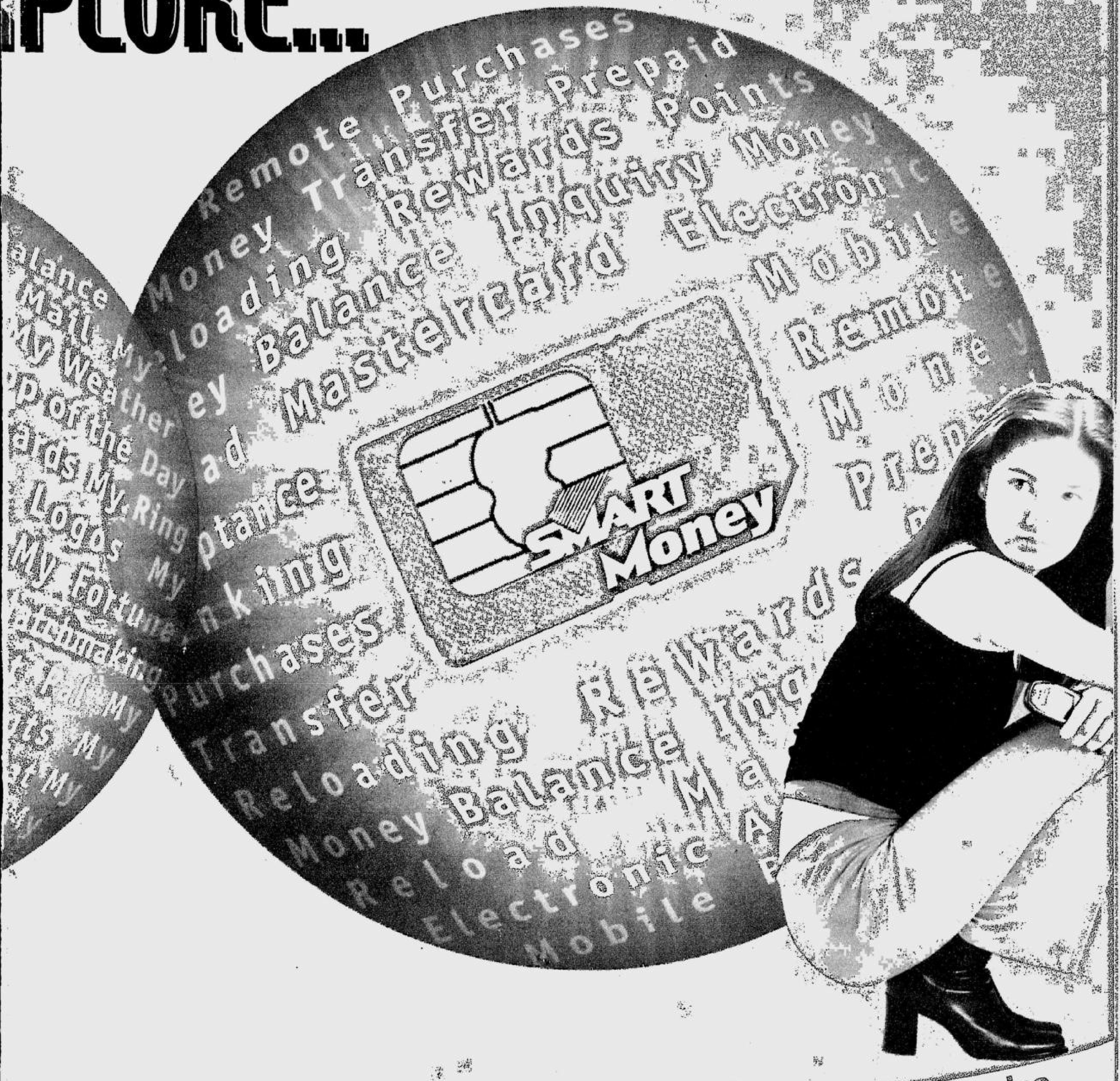
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Saving the party-list system

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

LAST April 10, party-list candidate Philippine Association of Retired Persons filed an urgent petition before the Supreme Court for "prohibition to forbid Comelec from including political parties in the party-list election system, such inclusion being unconstitutional." The court will decide whether the party-list system will live to a ripe old age or die an early death.

The Constitution says that the House of Representatives shall have 250 members unless provided by law. Twenty percent, or 50 members, shall be party-list representatives from national, regional and sectoral parties and organizations.

In the first two elections after the Constitution was ratified in 1987, the President appointed the party-list representatives. For the first time in 1998, they were elected.

In next month's polls, the Comelec, interpreting the party-list system law of 1995, allowed the major political parties to enter the party-list elections. PARP claims this is unconstitutional.

The old-style congressman represents a district with a population of roughly 200,000. But district representation leaves some sectors of society unrepresented in Congress. Take the one million retirees of SSS and GSIS. If they were distributed equally over 10 districts, they could easily elect 10 congressmen to represent them. But since they are distributed all over the country, there is not one district where a retiree can get elected on the votes of retirees alone.

To solve this problem, the Constitution created a new kind of congressman—the party-list representative. He represents no district but a sector of society (in the case of PARP, the retirees), and is voted upon nationwide. Only under the party-list system can PARP have a chance to elect three representatives, along with those standing for other marginalized and underrepresented groups.

How the two kinds of congressmen are elected differ. The district congressman is the one who gets the most votes. The party-list system law prescribes a different formula: one seat for every 2 percent of total votes cast in the party-list system nationwide, maximum of three seats for every party-list candidate.

The law creates a new arena where party-list candidates from marginalized and underrepresented groups wage political warfare to win a total of 20 percent of the House, or 50 seats in all.

But, to elect 50 party-list representatives, every last one of the winners will have to garner exactly 2 percent of total votes, no more, no less. And all the losers will have to get zero votes. This is a mathematical improbability.

Then, since 1987, the number of districts has gone up by 15. Twenty percent of these, or three, brings the party-list representatives to 53. But the minimum requirement of 2 percent per seat remains. Thus, to elect 53 members, 106 percent of total votes are needed. This is a mathematical impossibility.

Because of the mathematical improbability and impossibility in it, the party-list system law fails to provide the guidelines for carrying out fully the constitutional mandate that 20 percent of the House members should be party-list representatives. Nevertheless, the law allows a number of party-list representatives to get actually elected. In 1998, 12 won seats.

But now, even this small number is threatened by the entry of the major political parties, like Lakas-NUCD and PDP-Laban, into the party-list election system.

As many as 20 million are estimated to vote in the system. It will then take 1,200,000 votes to win the maximum three seats per party-list candidate. This number is easily within reach of the major political parties with tens of thousands of candidates vying at all levels of elective positions nationwide. And these political parties control most of the barangays. What chance do the party-list candidacies of marginalized and underrepresented groups have against these well-entrenched major political parties?

PARP says that a political party battling nationwide for district representatives comprising 80 percent of the House should not be allowed to take part in the contest for party-list representatives from marginalized and underrepresented groups and comprising only 20 percent of the House. The political party must be made to choose one arena or the other. It should not be allowed to fight in both.

PARP's lawyers, all working for free, also believe that this undue and unfair advantage granted the major political parties by the party-list system law, as interpreted and implemented by Comelec, clearly violates the equal protection clause in the Constitution.

Unless the Supreme Court rules favorably on PARP's petition, the major political parties will gobble up the party-list system. The constitutional mandate will have been thwarted. And the party-list system of marginalized and underrepresented groups will die an early death.

I urge all party-list candidates to join PARP at the Supreme Court especially those who may have arguments in addition to what PARP has already put forward. Let us all help in saving the party-list system.

CAPTAINS OF INDUSTRY ROGER CARPIO

The Ayalas (from left), Jaime Augusto, Jaime and Fernando Zobel de Ayala, preside over a stockholders meeting of Ayala Corp. Ayala said on Friday it expected to spend P47 billion in capital expenditure this year.

Gov't removes movie industry in perks list

BY GIL C. CABACUNGAN JR.

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority has removed the local entertainment industry from its list of investment areas that the Macapagal administration will support for development with fiscal perks.

Neda, which along with the Board of Investments is reviewing this year's Investment Priorities Plan, reckoned there were investment areas that were more deserving of government support than the local movie and music industries.

The Macapagal administration is trimming its Investment Priorities Plan this year in view of its limited capacity to grant fiscal incentives such as income tax breaks.

The luckless Philippine entertainment industry was finally lined up for inclusion in the 2001 Investment Priorities Plan after over two years of intense lobbying during the term of ousted President Joseph Estrada, a former actor.

Estrada vowed government support for the entertainment industry after movie producers led an advertising boycott of the INQUIRER in 1999. Its inclusion would have given incentives to producers of television programs, movies and musical recordings.

The entertainment industry had hoped to get government support to lower costs of production and improve quality. The entertainment industry claimed it had a potential to become a dollar-earner for the country, citing hefty revenues derived by Hollywood producers from overseas ticket sales.

But a government source said Neda felt that giving incentives to movies and musical recordings geared for the local market would only lead them to produce more low-quality fare.

The source said the entertainment industry was already eligible for incentives as an exporter if they market their movies or musical recordings abroad. Also, Neda felt that the cut in amusement tax from 30 percent to 15 percent was enough to ease the tax burden of movie producers.

The Neda-BOI committee is expected to submit its final line-up of investment areas for the 2001 Investment Priorities Plan before the end of this month.

NTC deregulates Internet rates

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

THE NATIONAL Telecommunications Commission has deregulated the rates for mobile Internet access as people begin to use their phones more for data services than for voice calls.

In a memorandum dated April 19, 2001, the NTC said there appeared to be sufficient competition in the provision of mobile Internet services by mobile phone companies such as Globe Telecom Inc. and Smart Communications Inc.

At present, Globe and Smart offer this service through a technology called wireless application protocol and a transmission medium called general packet radio service.

NTC Commissioner Eliseo Rio Jr. said in an interview that the promotional rates offered by Globe and Smart for their mobile Internet services would expire soon as they were valid only for 30 days.

"I think Globe is offering its WAP service for P2 per minute while Smart has similar rates. We hope that by deregulating these rates, they would become much cheaper. So let the market forces decide," Rio said.

GSIS chief's accusations 'baseless,' says San Miguel

SAN Miguel Corp. has said the accusations by Government Service Insurance System president and general manager Winston Garcia that it has entered into "questionable deals and contracts" and that it is "stonewalling" government moves to probe these alleged deals and contracts are "all baseless and unfounded."

San Miguel issued the statement in response to a report that Garcia accused San Miguel management of refusing to "divulge relevant information on a number of doubtful and hurried deeds entered into by San Miguel."

The company said all of the major transactions it entered into were carefully and painstakingly evaluated before any decisions were made. These were all duly approved by the board of directors.

The Coca-Cola Bottlers Philippines Inc. purchase, for instance, was initiated way back in February 2000 and involved three listed parties—San Miguel, Coca-Cola Amatil and The Coca-Cola Co. ABN-Amro, an independent investment advisor, did the valuation. The Pure Foods acquisition was already being studied as early as July 2000. Discussions started in earnest in January this year, culminating in the signing of a memorandum of understanding between San Miguel and Pure Foods owner Ayala Corp. in mid-March.

The company said all members of its board, including Garcia, who represents San Miguel shares held by the GSIS, were equally provided with documents and information pertinent to major transactions or contracts that required board approval. At no time since Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. was elected as San Miguel chair did management withhold any information from the board or any board member, San Miguel said.

San Miguel said all information and data regarding the Coca-Cola, Pure Foods and Campofrio transactions were presented to the board of directors. In fact, immediately before the Feb. 1, 2001 board meeting, which was the first meeting attended by Garcia and Social Security System chair and president Vitaliano Nañagas II, the two were briefed on the Coca-Cola transaction by ABN-Amro and San Miguel corporate planning executives. At the March 15, 2001 meeting in which Garcia was present, investment adviser Lehman Brothers presented the Pure Foods acquisition to the board.

San Miguel corporate secretary Francis Jardeleza said he provided the office of the GSIS president with the documents and materials requested, particularly minutes of San Miguel Board meetings from July 1998 to February 2001, among others. Garcia's office was also furnished documents pertaining to the Pure Foods and Campofrio transactions. Jardeleza said what he could not provide were the minutes of the March 2001 board meeting because the board had not yet approved the minutes, a fact that Jardeleza had informed Garcia's office in writing.

"These were all transmitted to the office of Mr. Garcia and duly received and acknowledge by his people," Jardeleza said.

19 projects in Central Luzon open for joint venture deals

BY TONETTE OREJAS
PDI Central Luzon Desk

ANGELES CITY—At least 19 agricultural, tourism, social infrastructure and industrial projects in Central Luzon, mostly proposed by local governments, are now open for joint-venture partnerships, the Presidential Commission for the Central Luzon Growth Corridor announced on Wednesday.

The commission said all the projects are located within the "W Growth Corridor," or in major towns and cities with high potentials for growth that form a "W" shape in the region's map.

According to the commission's Central Luzon Investment Promotion Center based here, the projects either require feasibility and pre-feasibility studies or pre-investment studies and initial operations.

In agriculture, the La Paz Federation of Multi-Purpose Cooperatives Inc. and the Tarlac provincial government are seeking cooperation in the establishment of a post-harvest facility and trading center in Barangay Guevarra in La Paz town.

The commission has endorsed the expansion and improvement of a banana plantation for commercial-scale operation in Barangay Anupul in Bamban, Tarlac.

For the Bulacan North Food Terminal Complex in Bocaue town, the Bulacan provincial government is seeking financing for the construction of an agro-industrial and commercial estate.

In Guiguinto, Bulacan, the municipal government wants fund support for the construction of a livestock market and abattoir to prevent illegal slaughtering and trading.

In Nueva Ecija, the Palayan City government wants to develop a 148-hectare land in Barangay Atate into the Palayan City Agro-Industrial Center.

In San Jose City also in Nueva Ecija, the commission sees investment opportunity in the Northern Ecija cold storage plant.

Through the project, onion farmers can benefit from cold storage services, credit facility, marketing assistance and technical support.

In Pampanga, the commission said the NK Farms Enterprises needs foreign and local funding for the full operation of a 25-hectare land for fruits, vegetable and aquatic food products.

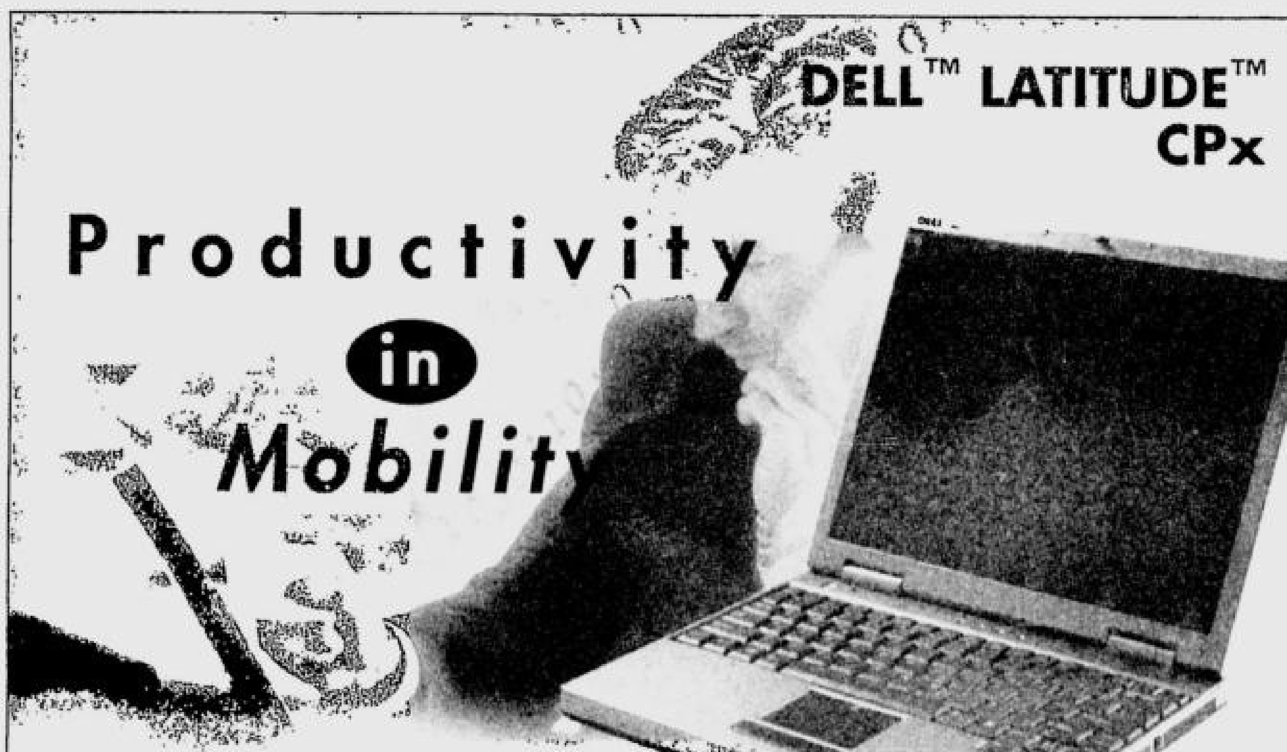
In Abucay, Bataan, the Sibul Spring has been a major tourism resource for decades. This year, the municipal government wants to rehabilitate the famous spring through the construction of support infrastructure facilities.

In Balanga City, the VL Group of Companies is seeking foreign capital for the construction of a first class tourist inn, hotel and convention center that will cater to local and international tourists.

In Candelaria, Zambales, the municipal government is seeking private funding and technology support for the establishment of a fish sanctuary in a 20-hectare portion of the Uacon Lake.

Mt. Tapulao in Palauig, Zambales is being eyed as an eco-tourism park by the provincial government and the Palauig municipal government.

Watershed rehabilitation, irrigation and solid waste management projects were proposed in Nueva Ecija, San Jose del Monte City and in Moncada, Tarlac.



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Viacom pursues content talks with PLDT

BY ANTHONY O. ALCANTARA

VIACOM Inc. is pursuing talks to provide content for Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co.'s convergence initiatives.

The multimedia giant, however, said it would have to review first the performance of MTV Philippines, a joint-venture channel between Viacom's MTV Asia and PLDT's Nation Broadcasting Corp.

Mediaquest Holdings Inc. president Antonio Samson said Viacom "is still happy" with the way MTV Philippines was performing since it was launched in February this year.

"I think they want to give MTV one year. It depends on whether we meet certain targets," Samson told the INQUIRER.

Mediaquest, which owns NBC, is a subsidiary of PLDT's Beneficial Trust Fund, the retirement fund of PLDT employees.

Samson said there were financial and marketing targets that would determine what other partnerships Viacom could have with PLDT for other program content. He declined to specify what these targets were.

Apart from MTV, Viacom also owns CBS, Nickelodeon, VH1, BET, Paramount Pictures, Infinity Broadcasting, UPN, The National Network, Country Music Television, Showtime, Blockbuster, and Simon & Schuster.

In an earlier interview, MTV Asia senior vice president and managing director Peter Bullard said Viacom was open to the possibility of providing other channels to PLDT apart from MTV:

"There's no immediate plan right now, but under the right circumstances (we may have other partnerships)," Bullard said.

MTV Philippines is currently available only in Metro Manila. PLDT wants to expand the channel's reach to Cebu and Davao by the end of the year.

MTV Philippines uses a 100-kilowatt transmitter with an effective radiated power of 4,500 kilowatts. This makes Channel 41 just as strong as ABS-CBN's Channel 23.

Napocor pressed to find ways to pay ₱42-B debts

BY RONNEL W. DOMINGO

THE NATIONAL Power Corp. has to find alternative means to finance its P42-billion debt, and fast.

Napocor president Jesus Alcordo said in a media briefing that the state-run company's debts, which included P15 billion in interest, were due to mature in November.

"We need to have an alternative financing (scheme for this) because next year, the interest would go up to P19 billion," Alcordo said.

He said Napocor might not necessarily resort to a bond flotation, but it would be "borrowing money to pay our debts."

He said Napocor still had no financial adviser, although Credit Suisse First Boston and Chase Manhattan Corp. had tendered offers to help it raise cash.

Credit Suisse earlier expressed optimism over prospects of accelerating economic and business recovery in the country following policy reforms that the Macapagal administration were implementing.

Stephen Stonefield, the global investment banking giant's chair for the Pacific region, said in a recent conference Credit Suisse's positive outlook was boosted "by the evident resolve of the Macapagal administration to strengthen its fiscal and monetary reforms."

For its part, Chase Manhattan Bank during a recent visit said that global investors remained bullish on the Philippine economy compared to other Asian economies.

Alcordo also said that if the power reform bill were not approved, Napocor had to find ways to manage its liabilities.

"We have to find ways to keep Napocor afloat," he said.

He pointed out that non-passage of the bill meant the debts of Napocor becomes a direct liability of the national government.

In a related development, Standard & Poor's earlier affirmed its triple-"B" local currency rating and its double-"B"-plus foreign currency rating on Napocor.

The ratings reflected the unconditional guarantee of the utility's external debt and other forms of support from the Philippine government.

The outlook on the power firm was revised to negative following the outlook change for the county in October last year.

Drought won't hit palay

PALAY output this year should hit 13.5 million metric tons despite a prolonged drought and a smaller government budget for agriculture, Agriculture Secretary Leonardo Montemayor has said.

"Though we have to do with the limited budgetary allocation and the prolonged dry season brought by El Niño, we are confident that the palay production output of 13.5 metric tons could still be achieved. This would be our fighting target," Montemayor said in an interview on Friday.

Montemayor said the Macapagal administration found the targets set earlier by its predecessor were still achievable.

The Estrada administration set a palay production target of 13.5 million metric tons, higher than last year's recorded output of 12.39 million metric tons.

Christine A. Gaylican

Piltel sees ₱5B in losses

PILIPINO Telephone Corp. is expecting some P5 billion in losses this year due to increasing marketing expenses for its global system for mobile communications service.

Piltel president Napoleon L. Nazareno, in the company's stockholders' meeting yesterday, said that Piltel was still building up a critical mass for its GSM service called Talk N' Text.

"Piltel's net loss this year would be approximately in the same magnitude as last year's," he said.

Piltel incurred a net loss of P5.15 billion last year. This was traced to high marketing expenses for its Talk N' Text service compounded by depreciation expenses.

Talk N' Text was launched in April last year, The digital mobile service uses the network of its sister company Smart Communications Inc.

The company has 500,000 Talk N' Text subscribers as of end-March this year. It also has some 290,000 analog and code division multiple access (CDMA) subscribers as of end-2000. *Anthony O. Alcantara*

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Study finds free trade spurs growth, but more is needed

WASHINGTON—Hong Kong, Singapore and the United States were once again ranked as the countries that enjoyed the most economic freedom.

These countries and others that had smaller governments, effective legal systems and non-restrictive business regulations did better economically and socially than those that did not, the Cato Institute said in its fifth report on economic freedom.

But even countries that enjoyed such economic freedom and were open to trade could do more to increase their openness to foreign markets, the report said.

The institute ranked economies according to their openness, listing Hong Kong, Singapore, the United States, Britain and Ireland among the most open countries in the world in 1999.

It also found that from 1980 to 1998 Hong Kong, Singapore, Belgium, Panama and Germany were among the most consistently open and free economies.

Myanmar, Algeria, Sierra Leone and Syria rated poorly in terms of economic openness, according to the report.

"What economic theory suggests is that countries that are open do better," James Gwartney, the author of the report and a professor of Economics and Policy Sciences at Florida State University, said in a news conference.

He also noted that the fruits of openness were not only better economic performance and higher per capita income but also longer life expectancy and, in some cases, positive structural reforms.

"One of the side effects of openness is it means it is more important than ever to get the institutions right," he said.

"If you try to operate as an open economy and you have an uneven legal structure that threatens property rights, or follow bad monetary policy or have heavy regulation of business activity, then what you will find is that capital will flow away from these kinds of settings," he explained.

The report defined economic freedom as a climate in which earnings were protected and where property rights and the free exchange of these properties were ensured.

Gwartney said reasons beyond shabby legal infrastructures and overly regulated business sectors led to uneven levels of openness even in economically free nations.

Western European countries, for instance, which otherwise possess well-regulated banking systems, even-handed legal institutions, sound monetary policies and were generally open to trade, did not perform at their full potential because of big government and heavily regulated labor markets, Gwartney said.

The German government, for example, dramatically swelled in the early 1990s in the aftermath of the country's unification. In addition, its labor market was very heavily regulated, notably by restrictions on the dismissal of workers, which made hiring very costly and contributed to the relatively high level of unemployment, Gwartney said. *Reuters*

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Recent events indicate that there is a well-oiled and well-organized effort by a cabal of competitors and detractors who are hell-bent on destroying the good name and business reputation of our client, **PROSPERITY.COM, INC.**, a corporation duly organized and existing under and by virtue of the laws of the Republic of the Philippines. We are issuing this statement for the information of the public and to serve as a clear and categorical warning to said persons and groups that our client shall take appropriate legal actions against any defamatory, libelous and unfounded allegations levelled against **Prosperity.com**, its officers and staff.

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Bush gov't to reinstate environmental reviews

WASHINGTON—The Bush administration has decided it will abide by a Clinton-era executive order that subjects future trade agreements to environmental reviews.

"Environmental reviews are an important policy tool for involving the public in the development of the US government's trade objectives and policies," the office of US Trade Representative Robert Zoellick said Friday in a release announcing the decision.

Former President Bill Clinton issued an executive order in 1999 requiring that trade deals be reviewed for their potential environmental impact. Guidelines to carry out the directive were put into place last December in the closing weeks of the previous administration.

However, one of President George W. Bush's first acts in office was to halt the initiation of an environmental review that would have covered global trade talks currently under way in the areas of agriculture and services.

Environmentalists were not impressed by the Bush decision Friday to go ahead with the environmental reviews. They contended that the hemisphere-wide free trade area being discussed at a summit with Bush and 33 other leaders in Canada this weekend contains provisions they consider harmful to the environment.

"This is a classic Texas two-step. Bush made this announcement at the same time he is brokering a deal that will jeopardize the entire hemisphere's environment," said Sara Zdeb, a Washington lobbyist for Friends of the Earth.

The Bush administration had said in January when it suspended the environmental impact studies that it wanted time to conduct a broad-based review of a number of last-minute regulations and policies enacted by the Clinton team.

In its decision announced Friday, the USTR statement said that the administration had decided to allow the environmental review on the agriculture and services agreement to proceed.

The administration said it would also continue with environmental reviews begun by the Clinton team on free trade agreements currently being negotiated with Singapore and Chile and the Free Trade Area of the Americas, the proposed hemisphere-wide free trade zone that Bush will discuss from Friday through Sunday in Quebec City, Quebec.

The environmental review idea was put forward by Clinton as a way to answer critics who contended that trade agreements focused solely on removing barriers to the flow of goods and services and neglected other issues such as protection of the environment and worker rights.

Anti-globalization protesters clashed with police in Quebec City on Friday, delaying the start of the three-day summit. *AP*

US urges Thailand to become role model

WASHINGTON--The United States has urged Thailand to continue with political and economic reforms and to serve as a role model for other developing Southeast Asian countries

In a meeting here with Thai Foreign Minister Surakiart Sathirathai, US Secretary of State Colin Powell praised Bangkok's progress toward openness on both counts and assured Thailand of Washington's continued support.

"You have an opportunity to set an example of this democratic freedom and political freedom, but also of the economic freedom that goes with it and works so well in it," State Department spokesman Richard Boucher quoted Powell as telling Surakiart.

"They discussed the basic Thai government approach to stimulating the economy, keeping it open to investment, to privatization and things like that," he said, adding that Powell offered his full backing to those efforts.

Thailand's ailing economy has been described as crippled by public debt, shrinking exports and sick banking and real estate sectors but Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has vowed to tackle the problems and shake off the legacy of the 1997-98 economic crisis.

Speaking to reporters after their meeting, Powell said Thai-US relations were "on very strong footing now."

Surakiart agreed calling the relationship "close and cordial."

"We are now exploring many new areas so that we can have closer cooperation in both political and economic issues," he said. *AFP*

Internet a gold mine for Islamic investors

DUBAI—From paying alms to going on pilgrimage, from investing in global funds to online business transactions compliant with Islamic law, the Internet is proving to be a gold mine for Muslim investors in the Gulf.

A barrage of companies offering Islamic financial services online have been launched over the past year, and banks have had to refine and update their own Islamic services to compete.

"We give access to a range of the highest quality Islamic products and services from the leading institutions operating in the Islamic financial space," said Ramzi Abu Khadra, chief executive officer of iHilal, based in Dubai.

"We set up as an online retailer of Islamic financial products because the Web is a great aggregator of demand and a cheap means of distribution," Khadra told AFP.

Apart from Gulf Muslims, Khadra said iHilal was targeting the millions of Muslims living in Europe and North America who previously had no access to a "one-stop shop" where they could compare Islamic financial products.

Hato Hasnita Dato' Hashim, chief executive officer of IslamiQ, an online Islamic brokerage facility launched in March 2000, said "we exist because of demand and not through trying to create a demand.

"We have chosen the Internet as our mode of distribution as it is an effective means of reaching the Muslim community spread out all over the world," she said, predicting 15,000 clients by yearend.

"Technology, manufacturing, construction industries are Shariah compliant in most cases and in fact, if you look at the Islamic indices last year and the previous years, they have actually outperformed conventional indices," she said.

Banks that previously relied on Muslim account holders to invest in the banks' own Islamic-oriented mutual funds have been hit with the stark realization that customers now have the option of investing their money elsewhere.

"E-banking will allow the speedy delivery of personalized financial services to customers and give a chance to retain wealth within our countries," said Abdullah Mohammad Saleh, managing director of the National Bank of Dubai.

One Western banker said "banks that are not offering electronic facilities to their customers and are not willing to expand beyond the confines of the Middle East and North Africa will simply lose business."

But doubts remain among some IT experts and businessmen as to the real impact and understanding of the Internet as a tool for business in the Gulf where Internet penetration is not high and the gap between theory and practice can be huge.

"Forget Islamic banking for a moment, there is no real huge demand for e-banking full stop in this region. It is still a cash and contact society where Internet usage is limited," another banker said. *AFP*

Malaysia concedes IMF role in Asia swap deal

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia will bow to a majority decision on whether the International Monetary Fund plays any role in an Asia-wide currency swap safety net aimed at protecting countries facing balance of payments problems, according to Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad.

Malaysia's concession removes the main obstacle to ministers from 13 Asian countries signing an accord to set up a web of emergency credit lines when they meet on the sidelines of an Asian Development Bank annual meeting in Honolulu in early May.

"We have no choice," Mahathir told reporters in the Genting Highlands resort outside Kuala Lumpur on Thursday, according to Bernama news agency.

"If everybody thinks it's important to refer to the IMF, then we are a lone voice, but that is our stand," he said, adding that Malaysia had argued its case strongly.

Malaysia said the Washington-based IMF gave poor policy advice to Asia at the time of the 1997 crisis, and advocated the setting up of an Asian Monetary Fund more in tune with the region's needs.

The Chiang Mai Initiative, named after the Thai city where it was conceived last May, aims to avert a repeat of Asia's 1997 balance-of-payments crisis by creating a network of central bank currency swaps among the 10-strong Association of Southeast Asian Nations plus Japan, China and South Korea. *Reuters*

Ericsson slashes 12,000 more jobs as earnings shrink 90%

STOCKHOLM—Swedish mobile telecommunications giant Ericsson announced Friday it was slashing 12,000 more staff jobs around the world in the face of slackening profits and tough markets.

Ericsson said its pre-tax profit slumped 90 percent from the comparable figure a year earlier to just 600 million kronor ($60 million) in the first three months of 2001.

That figure included a one-time capital gain of 5.5 billion kronor ($605 million) from the sale of Ericsson's stake in US Internet access provider Juniper Networks.

It was at the high end of analyst's forecasts but roughly in line with the company's own revised projections.

Ericsson's beleaguered shares dropped 11 percent to 61.5 kronor, pulling the Stockholm exchange's SX-General index down as well.

Ericsson chief executive Kurt Hellstroem said in a statement that he saw "no signs of a short-term turnaround" for the company and predicted second quarter results would be no better than the first quarter.

Ericsson, which confirmed Thursday it was in handset partnership talks with Sony, announced a cost-cutting "efficiency program" that it said could cut up to 10,000 employees.

Company spokeswoman Aasa Lindskog said these reductions were in addition to the elimination of 3,300 jobs announced earlier this year and the loss of 4,000 jobs due to Ericsson's decision to outsource handset production.

She later acknowledged that a further 2,000 jobs were being squashed in the company's handset division under a separate measure while the company said it would also make drastic cutbacks in its 15,000 non-staff consultants.

Ericsson currently employed a total of 107,000 people, Lindskog added. "By the end of the year we will be under 90,000."

In addition to cutting back on staff, the company also said it was undertaking a "substantial reduction"—in some areas of more than 50 percent—of the 15,000 outside consultants currently under contract to Ericsson.

These numbers would put the total number of staff and consultant jobs being eliminated by Ericsson at perhaps 23,000, a figure approaching the 30,000 number cited frequently by investors and industry analysts as a "convincing" target to restore confidence in the company.

"A general economic downturn and an abruptly slower telecom sector are affecting our customers as well as us," Hellstroem said.

"Many operators are postponing their investments, which has resulted in an overall reduction of sales."

Ericsson's sales slipped 5 percent to 55.9 billion kronor during the period. *AFP*

PCCW tycoon slapped with lawsuit

HONG KONG—Richard Li, chair of Hong Kong telecoms company Pacific Century CyberWorks, was slapped with a lawsuit by US investors in a Nasdaq-listed dotcom over false academic claims, reports said Saturday.

The class action lawsuit filed in New York contends that Li misled investors in the Indian portal Rediff.com, of which he is a non-executive director, over claims to be a Stanford University graduate.

The suit alleges that Li and his fellow executives at Rediff.com flouted US securities laws by misleading investors about his academic credentials before an initial public offering of shares in the company last June, according to the South China Morning Post.

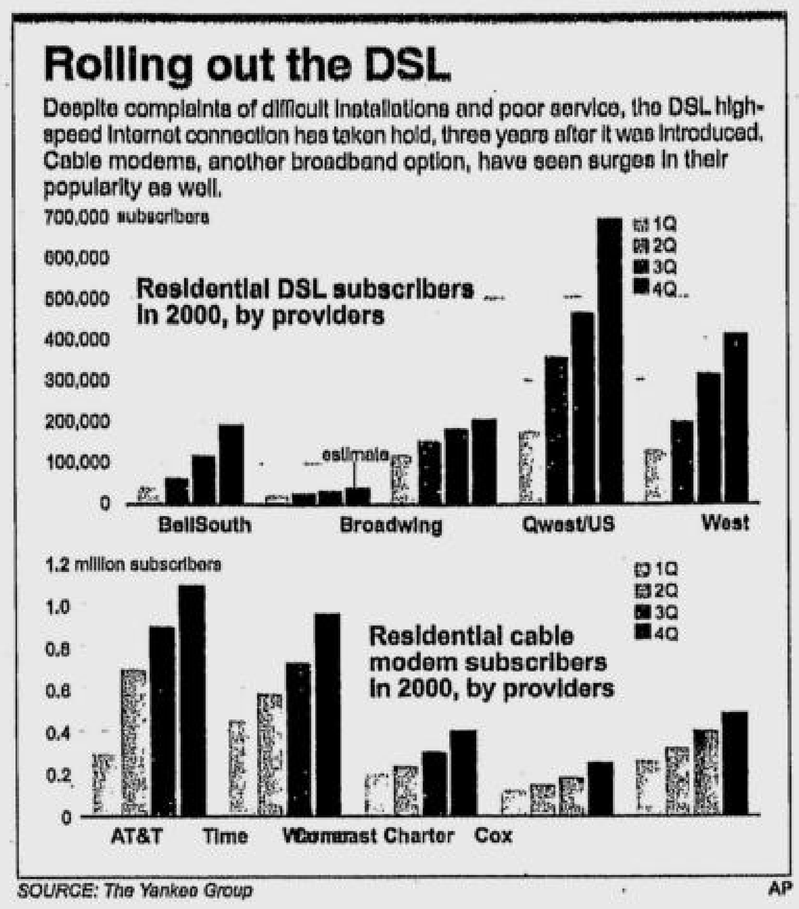
PCCW holds a 5-percent stake in the dotcom, whose stock has plummeted 77 percent since its listing.

No one at PCCW was available for comment about the suit.

The issue of Li's false claims to have graduated from Stanford first arose in March when reports emerged that he had dropped out nine months before finishing his computer engineering studies to take a job with an investment bank in Toronto.

Li subsequently admitted he had "done wrong" by not correcting PCCW publicity material which claimed that he had graduated from the prestigious Californian university.

IPO underwriters Goldman Sachs, Credit Suisse First Boston and Robert Fleming Inc. and other Rediff.com executives have also been targeted in the lawsuit filed by New York lawyers Lovell and Stewart LLP, local media reported. *AFP*



SOURCE: The Yankee Group AP

Nortel Networks reports $385-M first quarter loss

TORONTO—Nortel Networks on Thursday reported that its net loss in the first quarter came to $385 million after a gain of $347 million in the same period a year ago.

The Internet services and communications provider said the loss per share was 12 cents, compared with earnings of 12 cents in the same period of last year. Market analysts were predicting a loss of 11 cents in the January-March period this year.

Revenues fell slightly to $6.18 billion from $6.32 billion in the first quarter last year.

Including special items, Nortel's first quarter net loss was $2.58 billion, or 82 cents a share.

"Our revenues in the quarter reflected reduced capital spending by service providers and enterprises resulting from tighter capital markets and a severe slowdown in the US economy," said Nortel chief executive John Roth.

"The lack of available funding from the capital markets, high debt levels at many service providers and the compounding effect of the US economic downturn and its impact on other regions will continue to constrain capital spending by service providers.

"We only expect a meaningful rebound in capital spending following a period of industry rationalization and an improved economic environment. Given the uncertainty as to the extent and timing of these events, we are not providing specific financial guidance for the next quarter or full year 2001."

Roth added that Nortel was continuing to cut costs and expected to carry out a net workforce reduction by midyear of approximately 20,000. *AFP*

Mitsubishi denies talks of tie-up with Motorola

TOKYO—Japanese electronics manufacturer Mitsubishi Electric Corp. denied Friday a report it was in talks with US mobile phone giant Motorola Inc. to form a comprehensive tie-up in next-generation mobile phone handsets.

"We do not have any ongoing discussions with Motorola," said a Mitsubishi spokesman, who declined to be named.

"We have had general discussions with Motorola in the past about what businesses we can do together," he said. "But they were informal, general discussions. We do not have those discussions right now."

The Nihon Keizai Shimbun newspaper said the two companies were expected to form a joint venture as early as this year in North America to develop and make mobile phones that would meet third generation (3G) standards in North America, Europe and Asia.

Through the expected tie-up, Motorola hoped to cut research and development costs and gain 3G handset technology, the report said. Motorola would help Mitsubishi in marketing mobile phones in North America.

The report followed Thursday's acknowledgement by Sony Corp. that it was in talks with LM Ericsson of Sweden to link up in making mobile phone handsets with many manufacturers facing fast growing losses in the handset business.

Motorola's 60 million cell phone shipments in 2000 ranked second in the world, while Mitsubishi's 18.5 million shipments ranked second in Japan and eighth worldwide, Nihon Keizai said.

The two companies would have a combined total of about 19 percent of the global market, the business daily said.

Finland's Nokia Corp. is ranked first, with a 30.6-percent share of the world market, the newspaper said. *AFP*

Sun Microsystems beats US market expectations

PALO ALTO, California—Sun Microsystems on Thursday reported third quarter earnings per share of eight cents, beating Wall Street expectations by a cent.

Sun, a computer hardware and software provider which also does network computing services, indicated sales in the quarter ending April 1 rose 2 percent to $4.095 billion compared with the same period last year.

Net income, excluding special items, declined 43 percent to $263 million from $464 million in third quarter 2000, with earnings per share down six cents from 14 cents in the same period a year earlier.

In the first nine months of the fiscal year, Sun reported revenues of $14.255 billion, up 33 percent from the same period a year earlier; during the same period, net income rose 19 percent to $1.367 billion.

"Despite the economic slowdown in the United States, we were able to increase revenues over the very strong growth rate—35 percent—during the same quarter a year ago," said Sun chief executive Scott McNealy.

Added chief financial officer Michael Lehman: "Our results reflected the sharp decline in capital spending in the information technology sector, principally in the United States, although we did see some moderation of demand in Europe and Asia Pacific." *AFP*

Tough times ahead for Japanese economy

TOKYO—Japan's struggling economy faces lean times ahead with exports and production slumping and growth of below one percent for fiscal 2001-2002, according to a Reuters survey.

A poll of 30 economists produced a median forecast of 0.7-percent growth in gross domestic product for the current fiscal year that began in April, with predictions ranging from a 1.8-percent rise to a 0.2-percent decline.

All but two economists said the economy would grow in 2001-2002, but most forecasts were well below a government target for 1.7-percent growth. Only three expected growth to outpace that of last year.

ABN Amro economist Vincent Musumeci said he expected growth to slow from last year, when solid exports lent some support to the world's second-biggest economy.

"We will get a reverse effect of this in 2001 as external demand has been declining as we have seen in terms of export volume," Musumeci said.

"We have some considerable way to go until demand stabilizes in the US and the global economy as a whole."

Japan's GDP for the final quarter of fiscal 2000-2001 would likely be released in June. The economists' median forecast for GDP in fiscal 2000-2001 was growth of 1.3 percent.

Consumer prices were expected to continue falling from levels a year earlier for at least the next two years, implying no major change in monetary policy during that period, the economists said. *Reuters*

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NOTICE OF LOSS

Notice is given of the loss Alien Certificate of Registration (ACR-E 085813-1996) in the name of Niel De Leon Valentino

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For Marketing

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- With excellent communication skills in English & outstanding interpersonal skills
- Computer literate. 30 years of age and above.

For Finance

- A Bachelor's degree in Accounting
- No less than 10 years senior managerial experience (VP level) in accounting, treasury encompassing credit & foreign exchange, audit, tax reporting, and information technology in a multinational company setup
- Must have had long-term, foreign-based employment/assignments with a *multinational* company in at least 2 countries and exposed to regional reporting functions
- With excellent communication skills in English & outstanding interpersonal skills
- Proficient in MS Office programs in Windows NT environment
- 30 years of age and above

Qualified applicants must send their comprehensive curriculum vitae no later than 27 April 2001 to:

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SPECIAL ASSETS DEPARTMENT
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Tel. Nos. 844-6913; 844-4610 (Direct Lines); 818-94-11 to 20; 812-2008 & 843-78-31 local 2230 & 2308

INVITATION TO BID

Sealed proposals together with 10% bid bond for the purchase on CASH BASIS of the Bank properties listed below will be received at the LBP Multi-Purpose Hall, Wings A & B, Bldg. I not later than May 03, 2001 at 2:00 p.m. at which place, date & time, said proposals will be opened in the presence of attending bidders.

In case of closely clustered top bids (defined as having the second highest bid which is not below 90% of the highest bid), the opening of the sealed bids will be immediately followed by an open auction in which all bidders whose bids are not below 80% of the highest bid may participate.

ITEM #	PROPERTY DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	MINIMUM BID
1	1997 white "Hyundai" Sonata 4-door Sedan with Plate No. SFW-882	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	P 500,000
2	1997 l. green "Toyota" Hi-lux 4 x 4 Pick-up, diesel-fed with Plate No. UMY-969	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	315,000
3	1996 black "Honda" VTI A/T with Plate No. UKT-755	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	306,000
4	1998 blue "Honda" LXI 1.5 with Plate No. WEJ-498	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	300,000
5	1996 f. mica "Mazda" Familia 323 GLX with Plate No. UML-550	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	230,000
6	1998 dove white "Mazda" Familia 323 GLXI with Plate No. WCF-301	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	168,000
7	1996 white "Nissan" EX Saloon 1.4 with Plate No. PYC-303	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	110,000
8	1997 a. green "Nissan" LEC 1.3 with Plate No. UUZ-994	LBP Warehouse, Escala St. Bo. Mambugan, Antipolo City	80,000
9	778-sq.m. residential lot with 2-storey residential building	Lot 4, Blk. 6, Kamagong St. Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa City	18,412,000
10	Two (2) contiguous parcels of land, 587 sq.ms. with improvements	# 58 Luxembourg & Libya Sts. Better Living Subd., Paranaque	4,286,000
11.	280-sq.m. land (Lot 8, Blk. 4) with improvement	Darwin St., BF Homes III, Paranaque City	4,196,000
12	14,718-sq.m. agricultural land	Bo. Paltao, Pulilan, Bulacan	3,581,000
13	111.8-sq.m. residential condominium (townhouse-type) unit - Unit No. VVI-118	Cluster 2, Valle Verde I (BLCA) Condominium Project, Kaimito St., Valle Verde 2, Pasig City	3,449,000
14	8,484 sq.m. land with poultry/piggery houses	Bo. Lambakin, San Miguel, Bulacan	2,904,164
15	385-sq.m. residential lot with improvements	Lilac St., SSS Village, Phase III Concepcion II, Marikina City	2,835,000
16	200-sq.m. land with 1-storey residential building	# 8808 Nacar St., Marcelo Green Village, Phase 5, Paranaque City	2,472,000
17	264-sq.m. residential lot with 9-door apartment type 2-storey residential bldg	# 13 Del Carmen St., Sta. Teresita Village, Concepcion, Marikina City	2,393,000
18	Two (2) contiguous parcels of land 672 sq.ms., with improvements (with Contract of Lease to expire 12-31-01)	Easter Lily St., BF Homes (Ph. 3) Subd., Caloocan City	2,240,000
19	667-sq.m. land	Longhorn St., Rancho Estate I, Concepcion, Marikina City	2,001,000
20	Two (2) contiguous parcels of land 447 sq.ms. , with improvement	Bo. San Dionisio, Paranaque City	1,534,000
21	Two (2) contiguous parcels of land 566 sq.ms., with improvements	Bo. San Juan, San Miguel, Bulacan	1,479,440
22	Two (2) adjoining parcels of land 5,878 sq.m.s	Bobonan, Pozzorubio Lingayen, Pangasinan	1,469,500
23	40,000-sq.m. land	Bo. Lambakin, San Miguel, Bulacan	1,243,353
24	240-sq.m. residential lot with improvement	Lot 4, Blk. 10, Emerald St., Union Village, Bagumbayan, Kalookan City	844,000
25	1,464-sq.m. land	Bo. Lambakin, San Miguel, Bulacan	483,120
26	255-sq.m. land	Mayville Subd., Laano, Caloocan City	408,000
27	296-sq.m. land	Tibagan, San Miguel, Bulacan	133,200

If for any reason the above-mentioned date is declared a non-working holiday, then the public bidding shall be held on the next working day at the same time and place aforementioned.

Bidding forms may be obtained from the Office of the Vice President, Special Assets Department (SPAD), Land Bank of the Philippines. Prospective bidders are enjoined to inspect the above listed properties before entering their bids. The sale of the properties shall be "AS-IS-WHERE-IS". The winning bidder/s shall take possession of the awarded properties without seeking assistance from the Bank. The award in favor of the winning bidder/s shall be subject to the approval of the LBP approving authorities/President of the Republic of the Philippines whenever applicable.

LAND BANK RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, TO WAIVE ANY FORMALITY THEREIN AND TO ACCEPT THE BID MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE BANK. THE DECISION OF THE LBP SHALL BE FINAL AND BINDING.

GILDA E. PICO
Chairman
Committee on Bids and Awards and Disposal of Bank Properties

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Time : 5:30 p.m.
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Refreshments and hors d'oeuvres will be served

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC

HENRY ONG

is no longer connected or employed with **ALLIED BANKING CORPORATION**. Information on **"QUALIFIED THEFT"** has been filed against him before the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, Branch 85, docketed as Criminal Case No. Q-00-94840-94842. Any transaction entered into with him will not be honored by the Bank.

For any information as to his whereabouts, please call the:

Corporate Security Department
ALLIED BANKING CORPORATION
Allied Bank Center, 6754 Ayala Avenue, Makati City
at Tel. Nos. (632) 816-1265; (632) 810-2464;
(632) 816-3311 to 99 local 3204 or 3494.

Any information provided shall be treated with strict confidentiality.

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Card of Thanks

We the family of the late

LOURDES C. YARISANTOS

who peacefully joined her Creator on April 11, 2001

wish to extend our heartfelt gratitude to those who expressed their sympathy, visited, and kept vigil and offered Masses and prayers.

May God bless you.

FLORDELIS SANTIAGO BRICIA

of #11 Maningning Street, Sikatuna Village, Quezon City

Peacefully joined her Creator on April 19, 2001
at the age of 75.

We, Jomar, Janet and Marcus together with her brothers, relatives and friends surely will miss her, especially her motherly concern to others.

We are happy with the thought that she is now with the Lord.

Her mortal remains lie at her residence.

Interment will be on Tuesday, April 24, 2001 at Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City after 8:00 AM, Holy Mass at the Divine Mercy Parish Church, Maamo corner Madasalin Streets, Sikatuna Village, Quezon City.

"For God so loved
the world, that
He gave His only
begotten Son,
that whoever
believes in Him
shall not perish but
have everlasting
life." John 3:16

JULIO D. PINEDA

of Bacolod City, Negros Occidental
Peacefully joined our Creator on April 21, 2001 at the age of 81.

His bereaved wife **Remedios**; children and in-laws **Edith** (†) & **Dondon**, **Norie** and **Lito**, **Dennie** & **Christy**, **Cecille**, **Tess**, **Juliet** & **Glenn**, **Mary Ann** & **Flo**, and **Gerry** & **Carol**; grandchildren and in-laws **Ruth** & **Jude**, **Iguy**, **Dona**, **Joe** & **Regina**, **Al** & **Martha**, **Eric**, **Leo** & **Chierre**, **Reno**, **Machrie** & **Larry**, **Jae** & **Tootsie**, **Jet**, **Jem**, **Jewel** and **Liselle**; great grandchildren **Marjo**, **Iggyboy**, **Emily**, **Julia**, **Maxine**, and **Billie** and other relatives request prayers for his eternal repose.

His remains lie in state at the Holy Trinity Memorial Chapels, Sucat, Parañaque City. Interment will be at the Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City.

CARLOS OCHOCO ELIDO, SR.

October 29, 1916 - April 21, 2001
Died in the Grace of Our Lord at the age of 83

His bereaved children Carlos Jr. & Elena, Oscar & Mercedes, Leni & Johnny Arceo, Evelyn & Renato Reside, Spencer & Cynthia, Lester & Imelda, Angelita, Nella, Raul (†), Melba & Ernie Dyquiangco, Gerardo & Eileen, MaryAnn & Bien Topacio; grandchildren, other relatives & friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

His remains lie in state at the HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS, Sucat, Parañaque City

Interment will be on Saturday, April 28, 2001 at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City after the 8:00 A.M. Holy Mass.

QUINTIN R. ARMEA, JR.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on April 19, 2001
at the age of 60.

His surviving wife **Magdalena**; and children **Michael**, **Melanie**, **Marlo**, and **Mae** request for prayers for his eternal peace and happiness.

His remains lie at Chapel 1, Loyola Memorial Park, Marikina City. Mass will be held on Tuesday, April 24, 2001 at 8:00 AM.

Interment will follow at the Paraiso Memorial Park, San Mateo, Rizal.

CLASSIFIEDS

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
Energy Center, Merritt Road
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Telephone 8931320 loç. 5115 Fax 8154216

PNOC

INVITATION TO BID

The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested accredited or prequalified contractors to submit sealed bids for the project:

ANNUAL CONTRACT FOR HEAVY/SUPPORT EQUIPMENT RENTAL FOR BAC-MAN GEOTHERMAL PRODUCTION FIELD EDC 01-057

Bid documents may be secured from the Contracts Administration Group (c/o I.M. CORCUERA) starting **APRIL 20, 2001** upon payment of a non-refundable amount of **FIVE HUNDRED PESOS ONLY (P500.00).**

Sealed bids in two (2) sets shall be received by the Contracts Administration Group at the above address not later than **2:00 p.m.** of **MAY 22, 2001** and then publicly opened immediately thereafter.

For purposes of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **MAY 3, 2001, 10:00 A.M.** at the PNOC-EDC, BAC-MAN Geothermal Production Field, Sorsogon, Sorsogon. Site inspection to follow thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder(s) whose bid(s) is(are) considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

(Sgd.) Ester R. Guerzon
Manager, Operations
Services Division

(PDI--April 23, 2001)

National Power Corporation

INVITATION TO PREQUALIFY AND TO BID
SPUG-MMSS-01-011

Interested suppliers are invited to prequalify and to submit sealed bids to be opened publicly at the National Power Corporation, Strategic Power Utilities Group, 2/F Training Center Bldg., BIR Road cor Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City and at NPC-SPUG Visayas Staff House, 1558 Edison St., Lahug, Cebu City

SIMULTANEOUS BIDDING
BIDDING DATE: MAY 11, 2001
TIME: 2:00 PM

PRE-BID CONFERENCE: MAY 7, 2001
TIME: 10:00 AM
VENUE: AS STATED ABOVE

SCHED	BRIEF DESCRIPTION
PBTR010420-FCP048	LONG TERM CONTRACT IN HAULING OF DIESEL FUEL TO VARIOUS SPUG POWER PLANTS AND BARGES

Only accredited suppliers/haulers/brokers can participate in the bidding. All bids shall be secured with a bid bond in the amount equivalent to five (5%) percent of the total bid. The bid security shall be in the form of cash bonds, manager's check, cashier's check or surety bond issued by GSIS. As for non-NPC accredited suppliers/haulers/brokers, application forms for accreditation will be issued at Materials Management Department, National Power Corporation, Cor. Quezon Ave. & BIR Road, Diliman, Quezon City and NPC-SPUG Visayas, Martinez Bldg., Jones Ave., Cebu City between 8:30 AM to 11:30AM. Deadline for submission of duly accomplished bid forms addressed to the Manager, Administrative Services Division, Strategic Power Utilities Group (SPUG) before the time and date of the scheduled bidding.

Bidding documents will be available to qualified interested parties starting April 26, 2001 upon payment of P50.00 per schedule for bidding of supplies and services which is non-refundable and upon presentation of company I.D., company authorization and Original Certificate of Accreditation issued by NPC - H.O./MMRC/SLRC/NLRC/MRC/VRC and upon presentation of Certificate of Outstanding Performance from the Region. Issuance and receipts of documents are done every morning between 8:00 - 11:00 a.m. only at the above mentioned address.

The Corporation reserves the right to reject any or all bids and waive any defect therein and accept the offer most advantageous to the Corporation.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT SERVICES SECTION
ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DIVISION
PSD-SPUG

(PDI--April 23, 2001)

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Summer the time for 'passage to manhood'

THE PHILIPPINES as a society of predominantly Catholic and Christian believers extensively practice traditional rites that signify the coming of age of a child to adulthood. For males, circumcision is largely upheld as a religious practice symbolic of a boy's passage to manhood.

More than a traditional activity, several studies reveal that male circumcision has medical importance and benefit. Circumcision is the surgical removal of the fold of the skin that normally covers the glans or the head of the male organ. This double layer of the skin, sometimes called the prepuce, is more normally known as the foreskin. Existent for over 3,700 years, male circumcision has principal health advantages as it greatly reduces the skin of urinary tract infections, especially in the first year of life, and it ensures sufficient penile hygiene. It also aids in the prevention of certain diseases such as the infection of the male organ (*balanitis*) and as a treatment for the inability to pull back the foreskin completely (phimosis).

Healthway Medical Clinics promotes the importance of boys' passage to manhood with their discounted rates on surgical circumcision during weekdays. Healthway Medical Clinics positions itself as a "one-stop" outpatient medical center housing competent family medicine physicians, specialists and subspecialists in the pediatrics, surgical, obstetrics and gynecological field, with state-of-the-art laboratory and diagnostic services set in a homey and comfortable atmosphere.

Healthway Medical Clinics can be found at accessible areas: at the Basement level of SM City North Edsa Annex Building, Quezon City; at the second floor of the Paramount Building along Quintin Paredes Street, Binondo, Manila; at the second floor of the Ayala Life Building, Ayala Avenue, Makati City; at the third floor of the Plaza Building at the Greenbelt Shopping Mall in Makati City; at the third floor of Festival Mall in Muntinlupa City; at the third floor of Alabang Town Center in Muntinlupa City, and at the second floor of LTI Administration Building, Laguna Technopark, Sta. Rosa, Laguna.

AWARDING OF ISO CERTIFICATE TO HEDC
BY

HEDCOR GETS ISO CERTIFICATION
La Trinidad, Benguet-based Hydro Electric Development Corp. (Hedcor), a wholly owned subsidiary of the Aboitiz Group, has been awarded an ISO 9002 certificate by Certification International Philippines (CIP) after successfully completing a two-day compliance audit conducted in November last year. Hedcor officials and employees went to Metro Manila to receive the ISO 9002 certification. In the back row (from left) are vice president Chris Faelnar, TQM coordinator Carol Tuvera, executive assistant Darlene Arguelles, president and Aboitiz Equity Ventures chief operating officer Erramon Aboitiz, technical services superintendent Bill Haboc and technical services supervisor Bert Camacho. In the front row (from left) are Andy Faelnar, purchasing manager; Renato Navarette, Certification International managing director; Benjie Bartolome, technical services supervisor; Rene Ronquillo, chief operating officer; Ampohaw operations manager Joe Mendoza; and vice president Gregorio Jabonillo.

NEW PEZA REGISTRANT
Philippine Nagano Seiko, Inc., a wholly owned Japanese company manufacturing reduction gear boxes and parts (main project) and shafts for agricultural machinery (TTC Project) recently signed its registration agreement with the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (Peza) to locate at the People's Technology Complex-Special Economic Zone. Shown in photo are (seated from left) Yukio Kitazawa, vice president; Isoo Kamakura, vice chair and CEO; Tarao "Tiger" Kitahara, president PNSI; Peza director general Lilia B. de Lima; Junio O. Jose, managing partner; ACG Consultants Co.; and Marcy Velando, investment counselor. Looking on are Jocelyn Romano, Ruby Montenegro, Rizaldy Mojica and Ampelle Alvarez of Philippine Nagano Seiko, Inc.

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THE QUEZON CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
and INDUSTRY, INC. (QCCI)
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HOTEL

PAG-IBIG EMPLOYERS FORUM
Pag-Ibig Fund, in its continuing efforts to personally interact with its employee-members, recently conducted an employers' forum in cooperation with the Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry (QCCI). The forum proved to be a successful venue for the Fund to inform the different companies—through their representatives—of the various benefit programs granted by Pag-Ibig and the importance of Fund membership of their employees. Photo shows Manuel C. Crisostomo, newly appointed president and chief executive officer of Pag-Ibig, discussing the provident savings aspect of Pag-Ibig, and crediting the companies as being one of the cornerstones of the Fund.

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CMG brings financial security to the workplace

INTEGRATED financial services provider CMG of Australia recently introduced customized life insurance and retirement products for individual employees under the CMG Financial Basics Program. Products within this program are designed to meet the basic financial requirements of the busy, budget conscious, working professional through payroll deductions over a six-year period.

CMG Financial Basics comprises two packages: first is the retirement package which provides an inflation-proof pension benefit after 15 years, life insurance protection during the paying period, and double indemnity with burial assistance for accidental death during the paying period. The plan is also transferable. Second is the protection package, which provides inflation-proof lifetime insurance protection plus triple indemnity and burial assistance for accidental death during the paying period.

Both products offer reimbursement on medical expenses due to accident. The plans are also portable, which means the employee may continue his coverage after he ceases to be with his current company.

CMG Financial Basics enables CMG to bring affordable financial products and services to the workplace of the customer for his or her convenience, and enable payments through hassle-free salary savings.

CMG is wholly owned by Commonwealth Bank, the largest financial services group in Australia. CMG offers life insurance, pension, education plans, health care and credit cards.

Fed rate cuts can't solve all of US problems

NEW YORK—The Federal Reserve's surprise rate cut underscored a concern over dwindling US business spending, but the Fed's ability to boost such outlays was limited at best, economists said.

Fed officials are well aware that what they call the "blunt instrument" of interest rates cannot pinpoint the problem spots in the economy, like the current slump in business investment after a boom in high-technology spending in the last few years that spurred growth.

So their strategy appears to be aimed at acting where they can have an impact—shoring up the confidence of investors and consumers by aggressively cutting borrowing costs.

On Wednesday, the central bank lowered the two key short-term rates it controls by half a percentage point each, the fourth such cut so far this year. The Fed also signaled further cuts were likely in the months ahead.

The Fed's hope is the reductions will spur American consumers to keep spending on houses, cars and appliances. Those expenditures account for two-thirds of all US economic activity.

At the same time, the Fed rate cuts will probably keep a floor under stock prices, which bolsters consumer confidence and helps businesses struggling with a sharp deceleration in economic growth.

"I don't think lower rates are going to help much in terms of capital investment, particularly in high tech industries," said Robert Ried, president of bond research firm Ried, Thunberg & Co. and a former New York Fed economist.

"Equipment in those industries gets antiquated very quickly. It's not like autos, you can't discount and get rid of old telephones and computers because people don't want them so they are going to have to be written off."

Lower rates will likely help the consumer side of the economy as well as banks facing bad loans, making them more willing to continue lending, Ried said.

"They are definitely trying to shore up what they can affect directly—the consumer and particularly residential construction," Ried said.

Struggling to breathe life into the limping record-length US expansion, the Fed's policy-setting Federal Open Market Committee cut the federal funds overnight bank lending rate down to 4.5 percent—its lowest level in more than 6-1/2 years. The rate has been lowered a total of two full percentage points so far this year. The more symbolic discount rate on Fed loans to banks was cut to 4 percent.

The FOMC statement accompanying that decision prominently mentioned the concerns about business spending as well as the potential for slower consumer spending due to a pronounced drop in stock market wealth.

The Fed said businesses were making progress in reducing overstocked inventories, and added that consumer spending and housing were holding up reasonably well.

But the Fed saw investment spending weakening further and a growing risk of weakness in capital outlays spilling over into the consumer sector as layoffs and stock market losses mount.

"Capital investment has continued to soften and the persistent erosion in current and expected profitability, in combination with rising uncertainty about the business outlook, seems poised to dampen capital spending going forward," the Fed statement said.

"This potential restraint, together with the possible effects of earlier reductions in equity wealth on consumption and the risk of slower growth abroad, threatens to keep the pace of economic activity unacceptably weak," it added.

As demand in the economy has slowed and stock prices have tumbled, businesses have seen their inventories bulge and have cut back on production.

Meanwhile, share prices have fallen sharply and the cost to businesses of raising money in equity markets has risen. This problem is not readily redressed by cuts in the interest rates controlled by the Fed which do not always boost share prices.

In an environment of slowing economic growth, the expected rate of return on new investment declines, depressing profit margins. But the cost of borrowing in credit markets tends to fall when the Fed cuts rates.

"As a result, interest rates may have to come down a great deal and stay down awhile in order to turn things around," said Peter Kretzmer, senior economist at Banc of America Securities.

Reuters

IMF smiling despite mounting problems

WASHINGTON—The world economy is slowing, America could be headed for a recession, the stock market bubble has burst and Turkey's economy is in tatters, but as it prepares for its spring meetings, the IMF is happy.

Not that the International Monetary Fund isn't worried about those things as it readies itself for this week's gathering. It is. But those who work in the lender's bunker-like building in downtown Washington have good reason to be more relaxed now.

Because these days, the fund's critics are relatively silent. No one is calling it the devil incarnate and no one is demanding that it shut its doors. And, unlike during the Asian financial crisis of 1997-1999, no one is accusing the IMF of whistling past the graveyard as myriad economies crumble.

And the protesters who marred the IMF's meetings in Washington last April and in Prague last September have been diverted—they are planning to vent their ire at an international trade summit in Quebec this week.

Reuters

US CEOs more confident of rebound

NEW YORK—US chief executives, while pessimistic on the economy's near-term health, are growing more optimistic about the prospects for an economic recovery later this year, a Conference Board survey has shown.

The private research firm's measure of business confidence rose to 45 in the first quarter of 2001 from 31—a 21-year low—seen in the last three months of 2000.

A reading under 50 indicates more executives are pessimistic than optimistic about the economy.

"I think business leaders are not too concerned we're headed for a recession, but they continue to rate current conditions to be rather sluggish," said Lynn Franco, director of the Conference Board's Consumer Research Center.

CEO assessments of the economy's state at present improved slightly but remained bleak, with the "Current Economic Conditions" index edging up slightly to 29 from 26 in the fourth quarter.

But top business leaders' views of the future outlook improved markedly, as the six-month "Expectations" index jumped to 51 in the first quarter from 32 in late 2000.

"Hopefully, that is a sign that we are growing, albeit at a very slow pace. Their expectations are that growth should pick up for the latter half to the end of this year," said Franco.

The Conference Board survey covered some 120 executives from both large and small companies in a variety of business sectors.

Eighty percent of chief executives surveyed said economic conditions are worse now than they were six months ago—an improvement from 85 percent in the previous quarterly survey.

But more than 35 percent expect economic conditions to improve in coming months, up from less than 8 percent last quarter. Fewer than 35 percent expect the outlook to worsen, compared with 65 percent in the fourth quarter of 2000.

In assessing their own industries, some 38 percent of top business leaders expect conditions to pick up, while less than 22 percent are anticipating tougher times ahead.

But CEOs remain downbeat about the prospects for employment growth in their industries.

The survey showed less than one in five CEOs anticipated job growth, down from 34 percent last year. More than 50 percent expect layoffs, down from 22 percent a year ago.

"Chief executives say the biggest obstacle in hiring new workers is the cost of health care. Regulation and litigation costs, along with wage and salary costs, are of less concern," the report said.

Reuters

Microsoft beats Wall Street's income estimates

REDMOND, Washington—Software giant Microsoft Corp. has beaten Wall Street predictions by posting a net profit of $2.52 billion, or 44 cents per share, compared to the 42 cents a share expected by analysts.

The company, makers of the ubiquitous Windows software, said it had revenues of $6.46 billion for the quarter as compared to $5.66 billion for the same quarter last year. Analysts expected approximately $6.1 billion in revenues for the quarter.

The company credited the Windows 2000 Professional title as being a strong earner.

But Microsoft chief financial officer John Connors, in a statement, was mindful of the tough times facing technology companies these days.

"Despite this quarter's solid performance, we continue to be mindful of the current economic climate and the impact it may have on business and consumer demand," Connors said.

Microsoft has been aggressively relaunching its Internet efforts over the last few months, including its ".Net" and "Hailstorm" campaigns, which aim at making the company the first and last stop for online consumers, tying together desktops, laptops, handheld computers and Internet-enabled cell phones.

A decision is still pending in a federal appeals court as to whether the company should be broken up after a judge ruled that the Redmond, Washington, giant engaged in predatory, monopoly business practices.

AFP

Japan offers cost-cutting tips to small firms

TOKYO—As Japan's 10-year business slump tilts from bad to worse, the government has come up with suggestions for smaller businesses to survive the gloom.

In addition to its usual dry assessment of business conditions, a white paper on small and medium-sized businesses released on Friday gave more than 100 examples of ways firms could cut costs and become more competitive.

"The business environment for small and medium-sized businesses is very gloomy," said Kazuhiko Fuji, director of the research office of the small and medium-sized enterprises agency at the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

The report said small and mid-sized firms were finding business increasingly hard to come by, and setting only modest plans despite easy credit.

A slowdown in the US economy and other Asian countries that has dented Japan's businesses over the past few months has been particularly bruising for smaller firms, which have less of a competitive edge to start with.

Failures in 2000 hit 18,500, up 22 percent. One-third of the total were construction firms.

That was despite the government's generous loan policy adopted at the height of a credit crunch in 1998 that guaranteed loans of up to 50 million yen ($410,000) to smaller firms with almost no questions asked.

The policy was terminated as planned at the end of March with a total of nearly 30 trillion yen ($245.9 billion) worth of loans guaranteed by the state.

The white paper said smaller businesses felt financial institutions were strict in lending.

The Bank of Japan embarked on radical easing steps in February and March. But analysts have said that would not necessarily encourage financial institutions, still suffering under a massive load of nonperforming loans, to start lending freely.

But the report said smaller firms had become highly cautious in their investment anyway, keeping their capital expenditure well within their cash flow.

The amount spent on capital had dipped below the amount of free cash flow about two years ago, and the gap has been widening, it said.

Sentiment among Japan's smaller companies worsened for the sixth straight month in a March poll by Shoko Chukin, a semi-governmental institution specializing in lending to small and medium-sized firms.

Reuters

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Programme Highlights:

It's Business Unusual and It's About Time
By Richard Johnstone, Regional Director, Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions

Building Sustainable Competitive Advantage in the Information Economy
By Dr. Yuwa Hedrick-Wong, Executive Vice President and Chief Strategist, Strategic Intelligence

eBusiness Strategies
By Joey Gurango, Regional Director, Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions

eCRM
By Lew Choong Heong, Solutions Consultant, Microsoft Great Plains Business Solutions

Future Proof with Microsoft.NET
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BUSINESS*Monday*
MARGIE QUIMPO-ESPINO, Business Features Editor

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Do you need an MBA to become a CEO?

UNIVERSITIES and colleges have been responding quickly to the huge demand for an MBA (master in business administration) education or its equivalent. It has become fashionable—if not necessary—to adorn one's resumé with an "MBA," an "MBM" (Master in Business Management), or an "MM" (Master in Management).

Without an MBA—especially in the fierce competition for a senior position in the job market—one will find himself outside the short list in no time at all.

The question is: Is an MBA attached to your name your only passport to a CEO or COO position?

Boyden Global Executive Search, a leading corporate "headhunter" around the world which has been operating in the Philippines since 1997, revealed that 70 percent of the top executives it recruited for major companies here have a graduate degree, most of them MBAs. That leaves only 30 percent having no graduate education, but who still successfully landed the plum post in an enterprise.

"Not everybody needs an MBA," says Glendon Rowell, Boyden president and CEO. "We know dozens of superior executives. They have college degrees only, but they have outstanding track records."

Entrepreneurial drive

More than an MBA degree, what most of the companies need are "executives who have the entrepreneurial drive and the ability to handle several disciplines at the same time," according to Susan Nicholls, Boyden executive vice president and COO.

"In the past, recruitment of top executives focused on candidates with higher education, believing that such training prepared them for the multitasked nature of the CEO's job," explains Nicholls. "The search was thus based on educational attainments, and even on specific disciplines," she adds.

"Just a while ago, a client firm would tell us to look for a CEO whose strength is marketing or finance," she explains. But clients have now moved away from such specifications and are now telling to just look for someone with the mindset, the track record, the discipline and the entrepreneurial drive to lead a corporation as its top executive, she points out.

Multi-tasked executive

The operative term here is the preference for a "multi-tasked executive"—one who can make a long-range plan at his desk or with other people, one who "walks the factory floor," and one who understand the "nuts and bolts" in operations and, especially, one who leads.

An MBA education teaches the understanding and management of various disciplines needed to run a corporation—strategic planning, marketing, finance, production, human resource management and information technology.

Fast-track vehicle

Does this mean, therefore, that one with an MBA can use it as a fast-track vehicle to become CEO sooner, not later?

"Yes," says the COO of Boyden Global Executive Search, who has handled such high-powered searches in over two decades. She reveals that most CEOs recruited in the Philippines are between the ages of 35 and 50.

DO YOU/ C3

Bankers in limbo

BY CLARISSA S. BATINO

TAN

NO, they are not puppets of Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco. Or so they claim.

Jeronimo Kilayco and Lorenzo Tan swear they have never worked with nor for Cojuangco prior to their appointments as chair and president, respectively, of the United Coconut Planters Bank, weeks after ousted President Joseph Estrada was sworn into office.

"I've never even met him before I worked in UCPB. I only read about him in the papers," says Kilayco.

Tan, for his part, says he always believed he was hired for his expertise and extensive background in banking and financial services. He had worked for Citibank, Citicorp, Guoco Holdings, among others.

Tan was a recipient of the Ten Outstanding Young Men award for banking in 1999.

Kilayco, a seasoned banker, had held senior executive positions in Land Bank of the Phils., PCI Bank, Merrill Lynch, Bank of America and IBI Asia Ltd.

In more than two years that the duo had been running UCPB, the bank had adopted a new look, brought forth innovations in the bank's computer system, and aggressively transformed idle assets into a flourishing mall or even a bustling coffee shop.

To some groups, including the government, however, Kilayco and Tan are but dummies of Cojuangco, and are clinging to their posts on the orders of "The Boss," a term of endearment of loyal San Miguel Corp. employees for Danding.

Last April 17, the Supreme Court started oral arguments in Baguio—where it hopes cooler heads to prevail—on whether it is the government or the shareholders on record who could vote and appoint representatives to the board.

Last Feb. 28, the Sandiganbayan—the wealth-hunting court put up during the time of former President Corazon Aquino—ruled that stockholders on record would be allowed to vote on their shares.

This paved the way for the group of Cojuangco who is believed to control Cocofed with a majority stake in UCPB equivalent to 51.6 percent, to call for UCPB's first annual stockholders' meeting in 15 years supposedly last March 6.

However, the Supreme Court had issued a temporary restraining order on the Sandiganbayan decision and again aborted the attempts of Cojuangco to finally vote on the shares he controls.

On top of the majority ownership registered under Cocofed, Cojuangco and his companies own another 17.8 percent while those believed to be his cronies, Danilo Ursua, Jesus Pineda Jr. and Narciso Pineda, account for another 15.1 percent.

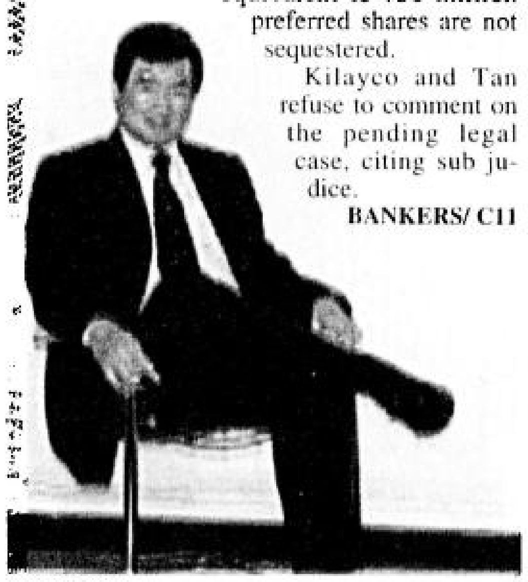
Also sequestered by the PCGG are 3.2 percent of United Coconut Planters Life Assurance Corp. and 4.8 percent of the oil milling group under the Coconut Industry Investment Fund.

Both groups are believed to have been created also as dummies of Cojuangco.

Of UCPB's shares of stocks, only 4.7 percent equivalent to 750 million preferred shares are not sequestered.

Kilayco and Tan refuse to comment on the pending legal case, citing sub judice.

BANKERS/ C11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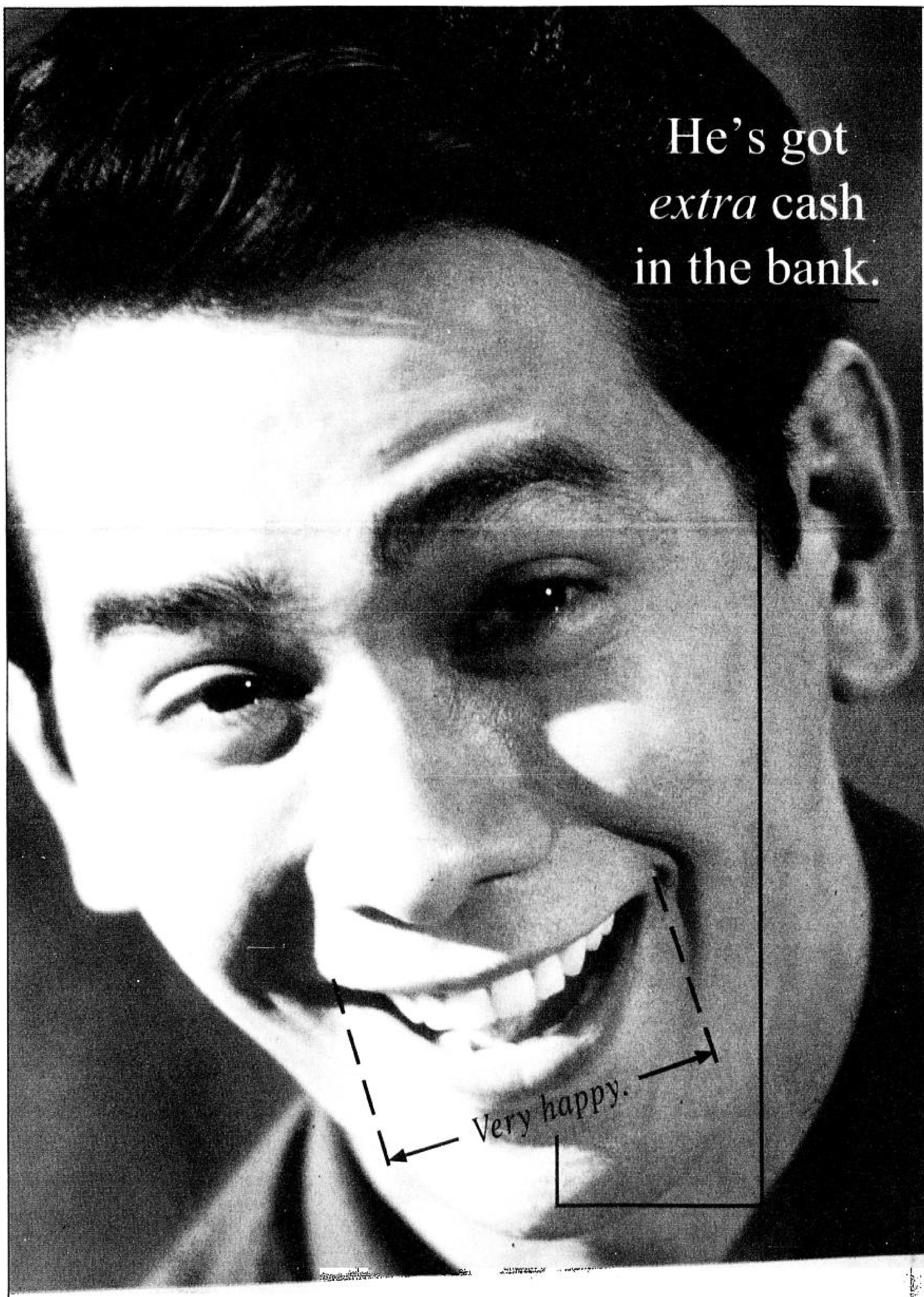
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CEOs as role models in the New Economy

(First of two parts)

MAPPING THE FUTURE

Corazon S. de la Paz

THE CRITICAL resource in the New Economy will be leadership in knowledge, intelligence and expertise. It is therefore imperative for the leader of the organization, the chief executive officer, to:

- Respond to demands of globalization in business and in the profession
- Revisit the company's core competencies if it must lead in knowledge assets
- Expand company vision to respond to technological change
- Develop social awareness for sustainable development
- Combine knowledge and innovation to create quality products and services
- Enhance interpersonal, communication and negotiating skills

Leadership begins with the CEO, who must be the primary driver of thought, decision and strategy, who must make present choices for the future course of the organization, and who must lead by example.

To illustrate how CEOs regard their work and how they will make their decisions in the New Economy, I would like to cite results of the Global CEO Survey sponsored by PricewaterhouseCoopers at a World Economic Forum held in Davos, Switzerland, two years ago. Although, some of the optimism expressed in the survey are being overtaken by adverse economic developments in the last few months, the conclusions on the needs of the New Economy continue to hold true.

The global survey gathered views from CEOs from across Asia, Europe, Latin America and North America on the pressing issues of global business and on directions for the multinational corporate world.

Highlights of the survey showed that:

- The CEOs focused on corporate vision and strategy as a priority agenda, but an increasing number of them regarded corporate culture and employee behavior as priority as well. Experience in managing multicultural teams was viewed as the most valued attribute for global managers.
- Nearly all CEOs agreed on knowledge management as critical to success for their companies; and accessing knowledge and knowledgeable individuals as relatively easy. Half of the CEOs saw electronic business as the venue for nontraditional competitors to enter their industries, but expected some 20-percent increase in their own e-business revenues.

Challenges in the New Economy

As globalization gains momentum, CEOs are faced with challenges never before known. The Internet has cut global corners. Websites have made transacting paperless. Focus is geared on new products and services, cost competitiveness and thought leadership to keep pace with the changing market profile and needs. CEOs must develop intellectual capital, marshal resources, and make a difference by creating essential products and services, strengthening relationships, and adding value to client satisfaction.

The primary challenge is managing a technologically advanced, fast-paced, global workplace. Yet the key asset within that New World would be what it always has been: outstanding people. Here are some comments from CEOs:

From Argentina:

"Managing people in a modern way will be most important—stimulating and empowering them to act on their own. Another key challenge will be making correct decisions in a shorter time frame."

From France:

"People will always be people. However much technology changes, people will remain the most important asset."

From Brazil:

"The challenges will not change drastically. What must change is the way CEOs address those challenges. CEOs will need to be personally adept at using technology to maximize their decision making agility."

From the United States:

"Not much will change. People will be the principal challenge for management—as they have been for the last 3,000 years."

For CEOs to be drivers of growth in the New Economy, they must be aware of the critical importance of e-business, Internet-savvy, knowledge management, personal attributes and values.

Electronic business

At the 3rd Asian CEOs Policy Roundtable at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) held a year ago, CEOs cited e-commerce as growing tremendously from $5 billion to $507 billion in the past five years. This is equivalent to 100 years of growth in a conventional business and indicates that e-commerce promises to take a more significant role in global business.

A number of questions have been asked about electronic business—that is the use of the Internet and intranet technologies to sell products, provide services, recruit personnel, and interface with suppliers more effectively.

Fifty percent of CEOs interviewed in the Global CEO survey said that e-business would provide an avenue for the entry of nontraditional competitors into their industries, therefore recognizing the Internet as a "disruptive technology." CEOs therefore must establish new value propositions of an entirely new different order than the traditional sort, with negligible overhead. new distribution systems—to quickly transform business before competitors use disruptive technology on them.

At the AIM CEO Roundtable, William Anderson, former CEO of National Cash Register said "E-Commerce is not simply adding another distribution channel—it is driving customers to do business in a fundamentally different way." Certain companies have almost entirely eliminated paper, their annual sales are handled on the Web. They have hundreds of millions in a year and reach over hundred million customers. Even customers that may not have Internet at home are able to shop through Internet kiosks in the store

Another roundtable participant added: "Simply establishing a presence on the Internet will not be sufficient. There are at least three things companies must do: develop an e-business strategy or lose market share; form strategic alliances to protect themselves from being locked out of key business sectors; and continuously innovate to stay ahead of the competition."

A Global CEO survey participant from Korea had this to say: "In the past, the biggest goal of manufacturers was to cut costs and increase profitability by mass production. However, in the future, CEOs will have to understand and adapt to behavioral, cultural and social changes brought on by the development of digital technology."

The Internet is regarded as a disruptive technology in its own right. Its open network model provides an entirely new infrastructure for developing and leveraging technologies and techniques that upset traditional business. Many of today's corporations face such disruptions as global competition shifts away from an infrastructure-intensive business environment toward a knowledge-intensive business environment.

As Diosdado Banatao pointed out a year ago. e-commerce has flourished with more business facilitators called "online intermediaries." These Internet intermediaries are able to: add value to the channel, create original content, aggregate and distribute third party content, enable personalized communications, facilitate dynamic discovered pricing (online auctions or bids), match buyers to sellers, and facilitate buy-side and sell-side workflow.

Another survey participant from Mexico sums this up: "In tomorrow's world, the growth of electronic business means we will need to watch for competitors who come out of nowhere and offer the same or better services than ours."

Internet-savvy

CEOs still seem to travel the world more often, than they would the Internet. This could very well be the case with Filipino CEOs especially of the older generation. The survey revealed that 30 percent of the CEOs rated their level of sophistication in using the Internet as "excellent" or "good." This showed that CEOs have graduated from basic computer skills to the Internet.

However, these confident and frequent users continue to be a minority. A majority of CEOs still rate their Net-savvy as "fair" or "poor," reflecting the lack of serious hands-on experience with this medium. This validates the position that the more adept the CEO as Internet user, the more potential he is likely to see in e-business.

As articulated by a CEO from the United Kingdom: "The ability to understand information technology and its implications—and then to apply that understanding to business—will be critical to future success."

Knowledge management

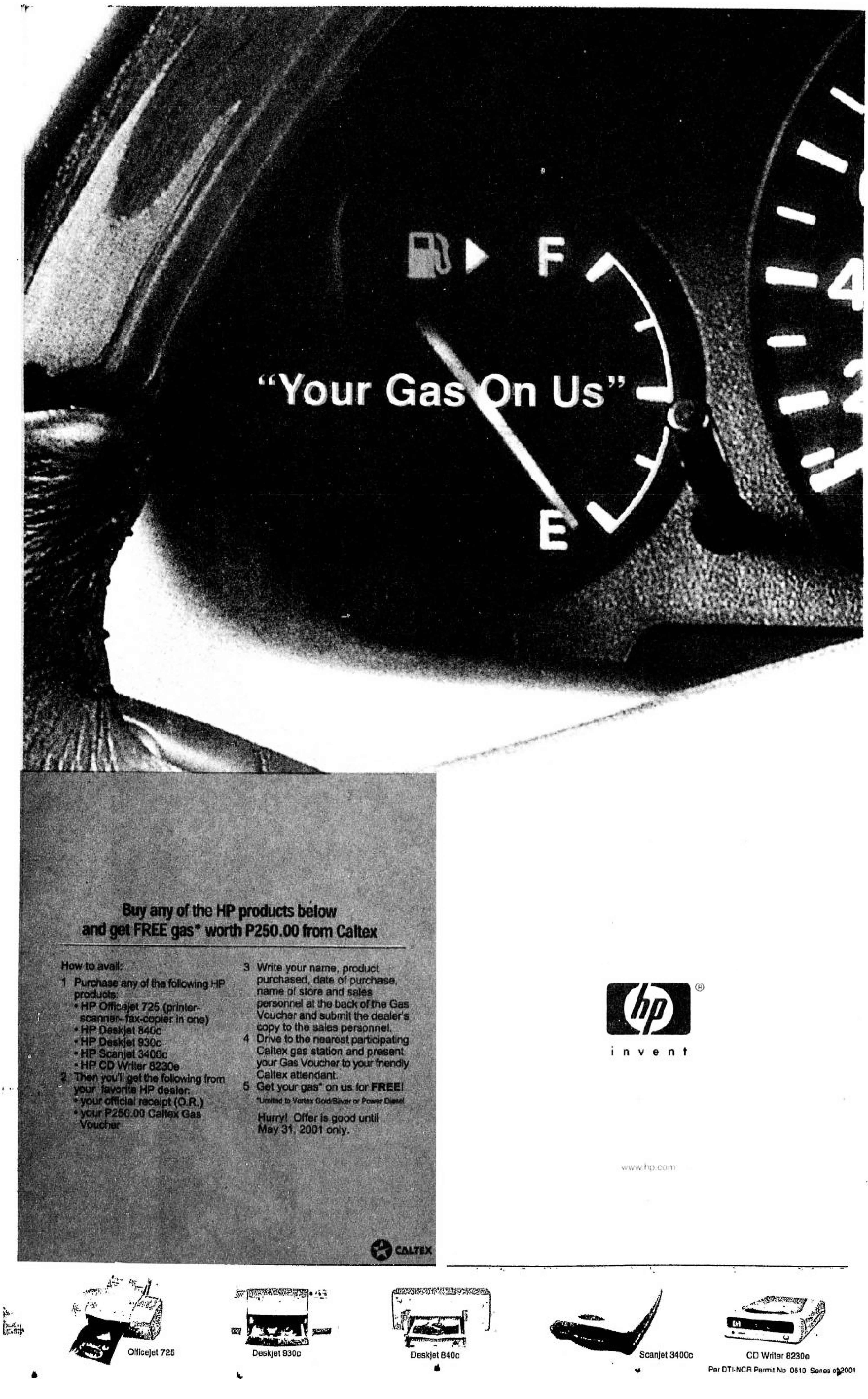
For many companies today, the wisdom, experience, and creativity of their people drive a large portion of their value. Managing intellect—finding ways to transfer wisdom from one group to another across functional and geographical boundaries—has become as important as managing capital.

Knowledge is defined as an intellectual asset. There is an enormous, untapped value in insight, wisdom, and expertise of employees. According to the PWC survey, CEOs of MNCs attach great importance to knowledge management. A near-unanimous 97 percent of those surveyed said that knowledge management is "absolutely critical" to the success of their companies.

The components of knowledge management include fostering the creation of new ideas and processes. It also includes:

- Identifying and capturing knowledge, both internal and external, then turning both into integrated organizational assets.

CEOS/ C3



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Discriminated against in workplace, women find fulfillment in business

By Vicky M. Hernandez

THERE ARE compelling reasons that drive women to set up their own business.

In the corporate world, women find it hard to work their way to the top of the ladder. The few women who make it as CEOs complain about gaps in pay and difficulty in contending with the old-boys network.

In government, most women executives are stuck in middle-management positions.

Even in the academe where women predominate the workforce, women university presidents and college deans are the exception rather than the norm.

In factories, women face more appalling problems. While their rate of employment in industrial workplaces is increasing and are the preferred workers in many assembly line operations, they work in inhospitable conditions. They are the last to be promoted and trained but the first to be laid off. It is estimated that they earn only a fraction of the wages received by their male co-workers. Stories of sexual harassment, as everyone knows, are legion.

Rewards in entering business

Given the discrimination women experience in most workplaces, it is not surprising that entrepreneurship is such an appealing option for women who want to earn income and make something of themselves. Entrepreneurship gives them an opportunity to exercise control over rewards coming out from their efforts.

Entrepreneurship offers prospects for unlimited income or at least income commensurate to what women put in terms of time, effort and money.

Their own business also permits them to control their own work schedule. It is an opportunity to exercise creativity and earn some income without giving up their role as wife and mother.

Indeed many Filipino women have found a niche in entrepreneurship. In fact, among the most successful women in the Philippines are managing their own business. However, much of this success is predicated on a middle-income family background. Most of these women have access to capital resources through personal savings, pooling of family funds, bank loans or participation from friends. They also have access to business and management training through formal education and entrepreneurship.

Development programs

Many organizations—government agencies, non-government organizations, industry chambers, church-based organizations, and the academe—are helping fill up the gap in training and development resources for disadvantaged women.

The more experienced of these organizations have found that helping women develop their entrepreneurial potentials through training, credit and other programs involve special concerns and problems not met in ordinary programs. These include:

1. Programs should be need-based. Trainers and other development workers should not assume that all women who are in economic need want to be entrepreneurs.

2. Programs for disadvantaged women should often begin with the empowerment process. Women should be carefully guided to understand their own motives, to reinforce their entrepreneurial drive if present, to discover their strengths and weaknesses and their potentials, clarify their goals and overcome their blocks to achievement. So many women in impoverished areas have to be convinced that they are good for more than the simplest and most traditional tasks.

3. Training should not be done in isolation, but should be supplemented by credit, marketing and advisory services. Especially for women who do not own property and collateral, credit programs are very crucial.

4. Menfolk must be involved in promoting entrepreneurship programs. Trainers must make sure husbands, fathers or brothers understand why their women are taking time off from their housework so they can give their womenfolk their much-needed support.

5. Programs should be scheduled around women's multiple roles.

(The Small Enterprises Research and Development Foundation (Serdef) and the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries (UP-Issi) will hold another run of the "Designing and Implementing Entrepreneurship Program (DIEP) for Women" beginning May 2. Those who are interested may call Nanette C. Milla, program manager, at Tel. Nos. 928-7076 to 79 or 926-6316.)

ENTREPRENEURSHIP is an appealing option for women who want to earn and make something of themselves.

Do you need . . .

(From page C1)

"MBA graduates would, at the very least, have the theoretical knowledge, and they could probably put things together faster," Nicholls explains. But, she quickly adds, "A person without an MBA would have to manage people who can do that for him."

The path toward a CEO position is a much-desired route. The question is: Does it take longer for a manager to be CEO if he has no graduate degree? "There are exceptions to the rule, but MBAs do get there faster than the non-MBAs," she reveals. "But remember, someone who has no MBA may have a brilliant assistant," she adds.

Both Rowell and Nicholls know the pulse of the corporate world in terms of what they need to fill up CEO positions. Running the Philippine office of Boyden—which operates in 59 other countries worldwide—the two headhunters reveal they have now a "well-developed eye for executives who succeed and those who fail."

"Good CEOs don't grow on trees—in any nation, in any culture. They're rare. We have noted something pre-eminent among qualities of these CEOs: they're leaders. They just don't run the business. They inspire their people to stretch their limits. That counts more than an MBA," Rowell declares.

CEOs . . .

(From page C2)

- Distributing and sharing knowledge within a corporate culture that rewards such activities.
- Leveraging knowledge by using it to create value for the business.

CEOs in the survey were confident that the underpinnings of knowledge management were in place. They were positive about employees' capability to find the right people resources with the knowledge needed to get a job done. However, knowledge and information differ. Data or information does not carry with it the rich context of human interpretation. Making knowledge retrievable requires making people involved and in touch with one another.

A CEO from the United States made a point that: "One of the pre-eminent challenges is to attract, retain and motivate qualified knowledge workers. Many of us have been concentrating upon increasing shareholder value by restructuring. Henceforth, value will be created by improved human resources. We'll focus on recruiting, training and keeping the right type of people."

In the Philippine setting, there is still a lot to do to harness know-how and expertise in knowledge management. For instance, IBM's Ramon L. Jocson said: "The Internet is a business of the creation of knowledge and content, thus it is important to have a human resource strategy. The country (Philippines) must train workers with the necessary technical knowledge to produce world-class content and applications for the Internet." But this would also require the massive investment in physical ICT infrastructure itself to enable businesses of all sizes to participate and thrive in this environment. ***(To be continued)***

(This article contains the speech delivered by the author, who is a member and past president of the Management Association of the Philippines and chair/senior partner of Joaquin Cunanan & Co. / PricewaterhouseCoopers Philippines at the 6th Annual MAP Management Conference on 20 March 2001 at the Dusit Hotel. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via mapsec@globe.com.ph.)

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Landbank spurs LGUs for rural development

BY GARY B. TEVES
President and CEO
Land Bank of the Philippines

THERE are numerous issues and problems confronting LGUs nowadays. These require full attention as they hinder them from fully executing their public duties as well as undermine their potentials for greater responsibilities in local governance.

First is weak technical capabilities. Second, limited resources have hampered the effective delivery of basic services to the communities and resulted in the slow implementation of development projects, especially for LGUs in the remote areas. Failure to sustain projects in the long-term is another major concern. Another factor is the highly politicized setting LGUs are situated in. Quite often, the pursuit of developmental and infrastructure projects does not go beyond the local chief executives' three-year term of office.

All these things considered, Landbank supports the national government's goal of developing capable, more responsive and responsible LGUs.

Landbank strongly believes in the LGUs' capabilities to lead their communities to progress because we know very well their needs and concerns. As local leaders, much is expected from them. And we believe that they are up to the challenge of honoring this trust by rendering quality service in return.

This is why Landbank would like to forge a stronger partnership with LGUs for we share the vision of bringing about meaningful change in the countryside.

Landbank has packaged various lending facilities to support the development programs of LGUs for their respective communities. We are aware of the great responsibility in sourcing alternative funds to augment traditional sources such as the Internal Revenue Allotment (IRA) and other internally generated revenues. We know that the financing needs of LGUs will continue to expand and will become more complex.

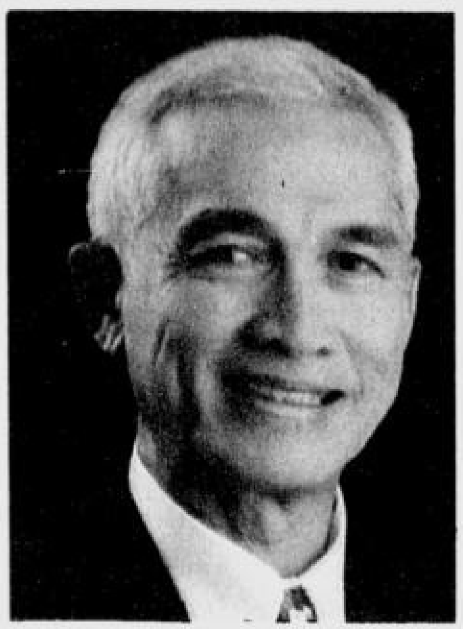
This is where Landbank comes in as we make funds accessible to LGUs. By providing their financial requirements, we also support the government's thrust of empowerment at the local levels.

To date, Landbank remains as the major source of financing for LGU projects. Over the last five years (1995-2000), Landbank credit assistance to LGUs has expanded vigorously. As of December 2000, we extended a total of P11.9 billion in loans to LGUs from only P1 billion in 1995.

From only 157 LGUs in 1996, we were able to provide loans to 419 LGUs as of yearend 2000 covering 52 provinces, 56 cities and 311 municipalities nationwide. These credit facilities financed the development of various projects such as industrial estates, roads, bridges, school buildings, public markets, purchase of heavy equipment and mass housing projects.

Of our total LGU loan portfolio as of 2000, Luzon cornered the largest share with P45.3 billion or 44 percent, followed by Visayas with P44.4 billion and Mindanao with P42.1 billion.

Some of the LGU projects which Landbank financed in the various regions of the country are the following:


THE AUTHOR

For the City of Cebu, the bank packaged a loan which is the largest ever granted to an LGU in the country. It provided a P3.6-billion loan for the Cebu South Reclamation Project, a component of the Metro Cebu Development Project III. The project involves the reclamation of a 300-hectare coastal area between the cities of Cebu and Talisay. The area is currently being developed into an industrial estate and export processing zone. This is expected to generate employment for 90,000 workers. The Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) partly funded this loan facility.

The city government of Muntinlupa was granted a P200-million loan in November 1998 for the development of a public hospital and acquisition of medical equipment. The Ospital ng Muntinlupa is a four-story 150-bed capacity hospital situated in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The hospital is a concrete proof of the city government's desire to serve the health needs of its constituents, especially the poor residents who will benefit from reliable health-care services at subsidized rates. At present, the hospital is already 90-percent complete.

Landbank also provided a P10-million loan for the Municipality of Medellin in Cebu Province for a socialized housing project. The municipality developed the New Medellin Estate, a 25-hectare property which was sold to the local residents at P200 per square meter. The municipality provided lands at affordable prices to the homeless residents of Medellin and the northern towns of Bogo, Daan Bantayan and San Remigio. With lands of their own, the poor residents attained a new lease in life.

Challenge to LGUs

The essence of local autonomy lies in the effective delivery of public services. However, in seeking to satisfy the growing demands of their communities, LGUs come face-to-face with a lot of challenges. Let me go through them in detail:

The first challenge is having the ability to know exactly what are the needs and priorities of the local residents. In doing so, resources are directed to useful projects that really contribute to higher employment, increased opportunities and incomes, and better working conditions.

Second, focus on quality and long-term sustainability in the selection of projects to be undertaken. Most LGUs are already constrained with dwindling local resources amid a growing population. This calls for optimal utilization of resources. LGUs should engage in projects that are not only highly visible in the community, but those that have deep and long-lasting benefits as well.

Last is people empowerment. LGUs should expand the essence of community involvement. Citizens should be allowed to actively participate in selecting, conceptualizing and developing community projects. LGU projects are meant to benefit the community so it is only proper that the citizenry be consulted.

Challenge to LGU treasurers

Let me now move to the challenge and the call for action for treasurers and assessors—the chief financial officers of the local government units. These are some suggestions which we hope are useful and practical in rallying LGUs toward attaining self-reliance as embodied in the local government code.

The strategic objective is for LGUs to lessen their reliance on the "internal revenue allotment" or IRA to a minimum. At present, the average dependence on IRA is 62 percent of total LGU revenues. For cities, the local revenues represent a larger component of 55 percent with the IRA accounting for only 45 percent.

My five-point challenge is very simple and fundamental.

First, LGUs need to expand their collections of real property taxes and business taxes through higher efficiency. I understand that the delinquency rate in real property taxes is still high.

In doing so, following are some suggestions:

LGUs need to adopt creative means to entice residents to pay their real property taxes diligently. The conduct of raffle contests or sponsorship of beauty contests with the various barangays competing for the largest amount of taxes paid have been proven effective.

For delinquent taxpayers, collection letters should be sent. A more forceful approach, which is seldom done in the country, is to actually auction properties whose owners are delinquent. The auction should be made known to the public to send a strong signal to taxpayers.

The second challenge is for treasurers and assessors like you to work as a team. Revenue collection should be regarded as a team effort. This is the essence of synergy. For example, in the collection of real property taxes, the assessors and treasurers should involve barangay officials, public school teachers, and the members of the school board.

Highly successful LGUs are reportedly those which have adopted this collective approach in revenue generation.

The third recommendation is for LGUs to upgrade their automation and information technology, especially in financial operations and real property tax database management. For one, this is necessary to update voluminous records. Secondly, the identification of delinquent taxpayers is efficiently done with the proper hardware and software. The right systems can even automatically generate collection letters addressed to delinquent taxpayers.

Having the right technology is an effective tool in enhancing the LGUs' revenue collection. We understand that the Bureau of Local Government Finance has projects addressing the IT needs of LGUs and these should be fully supported.

Landbank can also assist in funding the LGUs' automation requirements. In Mindanao, it granted a P2-million loan to the Municipality of Laguindingan in Misamis Oriental. The municipality embarked in a computerization project which entailed the purchase of computer hardware and software for tax mapping purposes. The project will help increase tax collection, especially for real property taxes as a result of a more efficient database and the easy retrieval of information on delinquent taxpayers.

Fourth, as the financing demands of LGUs increase, they must be creative in sourcing additional development funds. Today, one of the alternative financing modes for LGU projects is the build-operate-transfer scheme or BOT. The BOT uses private investment to undertake infrastructure projects which have been traditionally financed by the public sector. LGUs stand to benefit here because there is minimal investments and risks on their part.

Lastly, LGUs should also focus on other revenue sources aside from real property and business taxes. These include the collection of professional tax, amusement tax and tax on quarrying.

These are my five-point suggestions. But on the whole, I believe that the most effective way of enhancing revenue generation is implementing development projects. People will religiously pay their taxes when they see that these are utilized properly and directed for projects that are highly beneficial to the community. Thus, treasurers and assessors have to work closely with the local chief executives since the governors and mayors play a crucial role in selecting what projects to undertake.

Conclusion

Let me reiterate the crucial role that LGUs are playing in shaping the development of their respective areas. This is a Herculean task for it goes beyond improving physical surroundings and providing basic services. More importantly, it involves steering people and making them active players in planning and attaining the community's goals.

I mentioned three major challenges for LGUs which are integral to achieving this. But let me focus on the five-point challenge addressed to assessors and treasurers:

- Expand collection of real property and business taxes through higher efficiency.
- Synergize through teamwork.
- Upgrade automation and information technology.
- Be creative in sourcing additional development funds.
- Focus on non-traditional revenue sources.

Some of the challenges I've mentioned consist of highly charged words whose real meaning is often understated. We have all been tasked, in one way or another, to help develop our respective areas. In doing so, let us all remember that the most basic requirement is to ask the people who have lived there. What do they need? How can their lives be improved? What can they contribute?

These are simple and down-to-earth questions but more often than not, these make up the essentials. These draw the line from what's fleeting and trivial to what's lasting and more significant.

(Excerpts taken from the speech delivered during the 69th Phaltra National Conference held at the World Trade Center last March 21, 2001.)

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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
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As of March 23, 2001

ASSETS		AMOUNT
CASH AND CASH ITEMS	P	50 918 112 32
DUE FROM BANGKO SENTRAL		44 207 653 45
DUE FROM OTHER BANKS		65 800 928 42
INTERBANK LOANS RECEIVABLE		145 000 000 00
TRADING ACCOUNT SECURITIES (NET)		200 000 000 00
INVESTMENTS IN BONDS AND OTHER DEBT INSTRUMENTS (NET)		30 620 119 92
LOANS DISCOUNTS & ADVANCES (NET)		2,196,495,974 00
BANK PREMISES FURNITURE, FIXTURES & EQUIPMENT (NET)		80,390,041 73
OTHER ASSETS (NET)		
A. PROPERTIES OWNED/ACQUIRED		100,910,717 58
B. OTHERS		85 200 365 34
TOTAL ASSETS	P	2 999 544 112 76
LIABILITIES		
DEMAND DEPOSITS	P	41 217 894 67
SAVINGS DEPOSITS		1,337 356 044 33
DUE TO BANGKO SENTRAL		3 123 846 27
TREASURER / CASHIER / MANAGER'S CHECKS		13,210 047 05
UNEARNED INCOME AND OTHER DEFERRED CREDITS		763 002 68
OTHER LIABILITIES		1,184 744 087 90
TOTAL LIABILITIES	P	2,580 414 922 90
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
CAPITAL STOCK	P	300 000 000 00
SURPLUS		119,129 189 86
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	419,129 189 86
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	P	2 999 544 112 76
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
BILLS FOR COLLECTION	P	483 257 55
OTHER CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		3 544 246 67
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	P	4,027 504 22

OTHER INFORMATION*

1 Deposits Of		
a) Government	P	12 386 40
b) Banks	P	14,648,471 90
c) Trust Department	P	–

2. Compliance with Magna Carta Law: as of Dec. 31, 2000
Prescribed

Ratio of Compliance	6% For Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Actual Compliance	205%	102%

3. Amount of non-performing loans	P	220,073,871 57
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio		9.9%
5. Amount of classified loans and other risk assets	P	405,333,396 62
6. General provision for loan losses	P	8,194,939 50
7. Specific provision for loan losses	P	60,889,862 58
8. Return on equity (ROE)		4.55 %
9. Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	P	–
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio		– %
11. Amount of past due DOSRI loans/advances	P	–
12. Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio		– %

* Amended to conform with circular No 208 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to All Banks dated November 29, 1999.

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MAKATI CITY) S.S.

We, MARIDES G. BAUTISTA and FELIX S. SANTIAGO of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

(SGD) MARIDES G. BAUTISTA, Accountant and (SGD) FELIX S. SANTIAGO, Senior Manager

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 20th day of April 2001 at San Juan affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No 00011967 issued at the City of Manila on January 16, 2001 and Residence Certificate No. 07576013 issued at Morong, Rizal on January 12, 2001.

(SGD) NELLY B. MOLINA
NOTARY PUBLIC
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STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Head Office and Branches)
As of March 23, 2001

ASSETS			
CASH AND CASH ITEMS		P	3,939,313 151
DUE FROM BANGKO SENTRAL			2,836 473 696
DUE FROM OTHER BANKS			18 432 471 456
INTERBANK LOANS RECEIVABLE			14 096 991 006
TRADING ACCOUNT SECURITIES (NET)			8,141 001 491
INVESTMENT IN BONDS AND OTHER DEBT INSTRUMENTS (NET)			23 490,519 052
LOANS AND DISCOUNTS & ADVANCES (NET)			98 358 344 202
EQUITY INVESTMENTS (NET)			10,760 538,562
BANK PREMISES, FURNITURE, FIXTURES & EQUIPMENT (NET)			13,370,627 633
OTHER ASSETS (NET)			
PROPERTY OWNED/ACQUIRED			8 902,360,261
OTHERS			45,227 064 914
TOTAL ASSETS		P	247 585 706 454
LIABILITIES			
DEMAND DEPOSITS		P	5,732,506 416
SAVINGS DEPOSITS			76,277 996 419
TIME DEPOSITS			54,340,219 723
SPECIAL/OTHER DEPOSITS			93 365 382
DUE TO BANGKO SENTRAL			323 887 263
DUE TO BANKS			11 322 897
OUTSTANDING CHECKS/PAYMENT ORDERS			2,845,297 002
BILLS PAYABLE			
BSP - REDISCOUNTING/SPECIAL PROGRAMS			30 933 349 924
OTHERS			16 401 303 783
UNEARNED INCOME AND OTHER DEFERRED CREDITS			1 404 477 445
OTHER LIABILITIES			14 375 905 388
TOTAL LIABILITIES		P	202 740,651,342
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS			
CAPITAL STOCK			44 668 157 015
SURPLUS			5,535 014,247
SURPLUS RESERVES			362 435,560
OTHER CAPITAL ACCOUNTS			1,614,226 879
LESS PARENT COMPANY SHARES HELD BY A SUBSIDIARY			7,332,779 589
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P	44,845 054 112
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P	247 585 706.454
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS			
UNUSED COMMERCIAL LETTERS OF CREDIT			8,265 960 735
BILLS FOR COLLECTION			3 426,231 188
SPOT/FUTURE EXCHANGE BOUGHT			12 688,821 963
SPOT/FUTURE EXCHANGE SOLD			16,358,927,976
ASSETS HELD UNDER TRUST AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS			29,734,230,213
INVESTED IN			
Government Securities	4,914,730,288		
Other Securities Debt instruments and Shares of Stocks	4 824 570 698		
Loans and Discounts	8,758,370 685		
Other Assets	11,236,558,542		
ACCOUNTABILITIES			
Trust and Other Fiduciary	12,812,304,516		
Common Trust Fund	14,011 023 061		
Investment/Fund Management	1,544,004,597		
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	1,366,898,040		
OTHER CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS			6,844,225,776
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS			77,318,397 851

OTHER INFORMATION

1 Deposits of	
a) Government	318,547,347
b) Bank	421 289 560
c) Trust	2,101,443,828

2 Compliance with Magna Carta Law as of March 23, 2001*
Prescribed

Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprises	2% for Medium Enterprises
Parent	107 25%	252 45%
Parent and Subsidiaries	108.97%	249.79%

3. Amount of non-performing loans	24,825,142,062
4. Ratio of non-performing loans to total loan portfolio	19 78%
5. Classified loans and other risk assets	44,153,813,000
6. General provision for loan losses	1,170,304 000
7. Specific provision for loan losses	8,815,357 000
8. Return on equity (ROE)	2.22%
9. DOSRI loans / advances	1,815,831,312
10. Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio	1.45%
11. Past Due DOSRI loans/advances	0
12. Ratio of past due to DOSRI to total loan portfolio	0.00%

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

I/We, MARITESS B. ANTONIO and WILFRIDO V. VERGARA of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of my/our knowledge and belief.

(SGD.) MARITESS B. ANTONIO, Vice President
(SGD.) WILFRIDO V. VERGARA, President & CEO

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this 17th day of April 2001 at Makati City, affiants exhibiting to me his/her/their Residence Certificate No. CCI 1999 09092353, issued at Manila on 03-25-00 and Residence Certificate No. 04113928 issued at Makati on 01-18-01.

(SGD.) BENJAMIN B. MATA
NOTARY PUBLIC
Until December 31, 2001
PTR NO 3123633R
January 2,2001

Doc No. 283
Book No. 58
Page No. XVIII
Series of 2001

CONSOLIDATED STATEMENT OF CONDITION
(Bank and Financial Subsidiaries)
As of March 23, 2001

ASSETS			
CASH AND CASH ITEMS		P	4 001 094 141
DUE FROM BANGKO SENTRAL			2,880 681 550
DUE FROM OTHER BANKS			18 697 544 068
INTERBANK LOANS RECEIVABLE			14,241 991 006
TRADING ACCOUNT SECURITIES (NET)			10,531 845 687
INVESTMENT IN BONDS AND OTHER DEBT INSTRUMENTS (NET)			24 146 460 761
LOANS AND DISCOUNTS & ADVANCES (NET)			102 851 609 053
EQUITY INVESTMENTS (NET)			3,715 763 894
BANK PREMISES, FURNITURE, FIXTURES & EQUIPMENT (NET)			13,897,778,299
OTHER ASSETS (NET)			
PROPERTY OWNED/ACQUIRED			9,109 309 867
OTHERS			48 802 319 326
TOTAL ASSETS		P	252 876 397 902
LIABILITIES			
DEMAND DEPOSITS		P	5,334 120 402
SAVINGS DEPOSITS			76,613,547,026
TIME DEPOSITS			53 944 848 665
SPECIAL/OTHER DEPOSITS			93 385 382
DUE TO BANGKO SENTRAL			327 011 110
DUE TO BANKS			11 322 897
OUTSTANDING CHECKS/PAYMENT ORDERS			2,858,507 049
BILLS PAYABLE			
BSP - REDISCOUNTING/SPECIAL PROGRAMS			30 933 349 924
OTHERS			16,695 756 149
UNEARNED INCOME AND OTHER DEFERRED CREDITS			1,890 447 538
OTHER LIABILITIES			19,272 541 331
TOTAL LIABILITIES		P	207 974 837 473
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS			
CAPITAL STOCK			44,668 157 015
SURPLUS			5,591 293 464
SURPLUS RESERVES			382 662 660
OTHER CAPITAL ACCOUNTS			1,614,226 879
LESS PARENT COMPANY SHARES HELD BY A SUBSIDIARY			7,332,779 589
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS			44 901 560 429
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		P	252 876,397 902
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS			
UNUSED COMMERCIAL LETTERS OF CREDIT		P	8,265,960 735
BILLS FOR COLLECTION			3,426,714 446
SPOT/FUTURE EXCHANGE BOUGHT			12,688 821 963
SPOT/FUTURE EXCHANGE SOLD			16,347 636,776
ASSETS HELD UNDER TRUST AND INVESTMENT MANAGEMENT AGREEMENTS			29,734,230,213
INVESTED IN			
Government Securities	4,914,730,288		
Other Securities Debt instruments and Shares of Stocks	4,824 570 698		
Loans and Discounts	8 758 370 685		
Other Assets	11,236 558 542		
ACCOUNTABILITIES			
Trust and Other Fiduciary	12,812,304,515		
Common Trust Fund	14,011 023 061		
Investment/Fund Management	1,544 004,597		
Unearned Income & Other Accountabilities	1,366,898,040		
OTHER CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		P	6,847,770,022
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		P	77,311,134,155

OTHER INFORMATION

1. Deposits of		
a) Government	P	318,559 733
b) Bank		435,938 032
c) Trust		2,101,443,828

2. List of Bank's Financial Subsidiaries
a) Equitable Card Network, Inc
b) Equitable Venture Capital Corp.
c) EBC Investments, Inc
d) Equitable Savings Bank
e) EBC Strategic Holdings Corp.
f) PCI Capital Corporation
g) PCI Leasing and Finance, Inc.
h) PCIB Securities, Inc.
i) Express Padala (Hongkong) Ltd.
j) Express Padala, (USA) Inc.
k) PCIB Europe SpA
l) Equitable PCI Bank Cayman Ltd.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
MAKATI CITY) S.S.

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Until December 31, 2001
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January 2,2001

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Page No. XVIII
Series of 2001

"Itaguyod ang Philippines 2000. Mag-impok sa bangko."
MEMBER: PHILIPPINE DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION (MAXIMUM DEPOSIT INSURANCE FOR EACH DEPOSITOR P100,000)

ALLIANCES WITH INTERNET FIRMS

Four questions to ask before partnering with a dot-com

WHILE the Internet frenzy has certainly cooled, many executives continue to evaluate strategic partnerships with online businesses, including opportunities that came knocking unsolicited, and those they sought out on their own.

Given the new dot-com realities, how should executives approach forming alliances with online businesses—whether corporate venture, emerging enterprise or fledgling start-up?

Know the Internet company sensitivities

First, potential partners should recognize that Internet companies differ from traditional companies in two important respects:

Cost sensitivity. Most Internet companies cannot invest much money or executive attention toward building corporate alliance resources. Too many other priorities compete for investment dollars and for people's time.

Time sensitivity. Internet companies must build corporate alliance resources sooner, rather than later. Alliance growth comes quickly, and the cost of failure is too high to risk not having certain corporate resources in place before problems arise.

Move past Internet-speak

Second, potential partners should be disciplined in their approach and rigorous in their communications. In Internet-speak "fast" is often only a euphemism for "frenetic."

"Undisciplined" becomes "creative." The "untried" is known as "innovative" and "the rules have changed" replaces "just trust me." As this new market segment evolves, it must adopt a more standardized, less idiosyncratic approach to alliances to avoid the disappointments of the past. Despite the hype, the real Internet successes are typically built up over time.

A standardized approach relies on discipline, which is the prerequisite for rapid and successful growth in an alliance, especially during the first 12 to 18 months. Further, with each successful alliance, a disciplined company can become better able to transfer skills and knowledge from one partnership to the next.

Know what you want

Finally, establish clear, achievable goals for the alliance. Know what you want out of the alliance and know how to tell when you get it. Alliance managers often find it difficult to set specific alliance goals, even when dealing with mature companies.

With dot-coms, the challenges are even greater. The time and cost pressures placed on Internet companies create additional demands to reach measurable results as quickly as possible. A successful outcome is more probable when partners have defined goals with hard metrics and simple, achievable milestones.

The top four questions to ask

To discover what factors contributed to both success and failure in dot-com alliances, we interviewed executives at 13 companies (11 Internet companies and two established firms with many Internet partners) as well as 20 leading venture capitalists with insight into young Internet companies.

We found that alliances with Internet companies rarely do as well as hoped, and often perform less well than the general corporate population. The experiences of the executives and venture capitalists we spoke to suggest that three common mistakes undermine many alliances: lack of a useful alliance strategy, sub-optimal initial partnerships and inadequate corporate alliance resources.

With these common mistakes in mind, if you are considering an alliance with an Internet-based business, here are four questions to ask them—and yourself—about their approach to alliances that will help you better assess the odds of success.

1. Do they have a winning business model?

Any successful alliance depends on having a good corporate strategy behind it.

Given the extent to which many Internet companies depend on alliances for capital and business capability, the leadership team should have considered alliances in detail while constructing an overall business model. Find out how—or if—management addressed these issues.

Role of alliances. Did they define the unique capabilities they need to succeed?

Did they consider the primary options for obtaining other essential capabilities, whether to build, buy or borrow them?

Alliance groupings. Treating every alliance as a unique relationship consumes too much management attention. Fully standardized management, on the other hand, ignores the different roles alliances play. Smart companies group alliances to facilitate forming and managing them.

Timing and priority. Many Internet business models call for 20 to 50 alliances clustered into two to five alliance groupings. No start-up, however, can build such an extensive portfolio from a standing start. Successful companies take a phased approach, often divided into a launch phase, which focuses on a few alliances to help drive the business to measurable success, followed by a growth phase, which focuses on alliances to fill capability gaps, broaden market scope, address operating deficiencies and open the way to innovation. The growth phase often lags the launch phase by 12 to 24 months.

2. How do they manage launch phase alliances?

Two aspects of managing the relationship—performance tracking and staffing—can spell the difference between success and failure. Performance tracking does not come naturally to start-ups. Understandably eager to prove themselves, start-up businesses tend to take on too much work and to define expectations loosely. Companies must develop and manage specific but comprehensive performance measures.

Staffing is another key to managing the relationship. Alliances perform best when the companies define clear roles for individuals. In traditional alliances, this usually starts with appointing an alliance manager to oversee day-to-day operations and an alliance champion to monitor results and set strategic direction. But this division rarely makes sense in a launch alliance. It places too much responsibility with the alliance manager and distances the alliance from top management.

3. Do they have capabilities for growth phase alliances?

During their first 12 to 18 months, Internet start-ups should be building corporate resources (such as guidelines, processes and tools) to manage a growing portfolio of alliances.

In this case, Internet start-ups do not differ much from traditional companies. The alliance resources they will need depend on how many alliances they envision and the importance of alliances to the business model.

Instead of building the full complement of standard corporate alliance resources, start-ups should concentrate on a few resources. Therefore, as you consider an alliance with a start-up, see if the company has:

A dedicated alliance executive. Hired early, an alliance executive can provide a strong voice for alliances when the company is still developing its initial business model.

Bringing substantial alliance experience, this executive can usually build other corporate alliance resources quickly.

Corporate alliance guidelines. Internet start-ups will benefit even from simple rules for what managers should and should not do in alliances. Guidelines are inexpensive, especially when developed by an experienced alliance executive, and can shape how the company approaches alliances from the start. Guidelines might include allying only with companies that use proven technologies and considering only launch partners that bring multiple advantages.

4. Do they have well-defined processes for deal-making and integration?

Internet start-ups should have defined and documented approaches to performing common tasks in the opening phases of an alliance. Deal-making processes include assessing capability gaps, screening partners, structuring contracts and negotiating.

Integration processes focus on creating shared strategic intent, defining governance protocols and detailing performance scorecards. These processes need not be perfect.

Even a rudimentary sketch can help companies avoid mistakes, speed decisions, reduce workload and, of course, pinpoint gaps in alliance thinking.

Alliances with Internet companies can be a powerful engine of growth and innovation.

Before forming an alliance with a dot-com company, however, be sure to find out how they plan to avoid the potholes others have hit before. *(By Nick Palmer, Associate Partner at Accenture)*

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3M CG3480 Ink Jet Transparency Films	A size (215mm x 279 mm), 50 shts A4 size (210mm x 297mm), 50 shts	50
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4 Braun Coffee Maker	1,200
5 Kodak Camera	1,600

PREMIUM ITEMS	POINTS
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7 HP Printer	4,500
8 Aiwa Micro Components	5,200
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10 Palm Pilot M100	8,100
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b. Claim stub shall be given to the customer as proof of redemption which shall be presented when claiming large/high-value prizes
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d. Claims from GMA, Northern/Southern Luzon shall be redeemed from Makati office

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Note: Claims from Iloilo, Bacolod and other Visayas areas shall be shipped from Cebu office

* 3M Davao Office
c/o [illegible]
Door 3 Blucor Building, Insular Village, Lanang, Davao City

Note: Claims from Cagayan de Oro, General Santos and other Mindanao areas shall be shipped from Davao office

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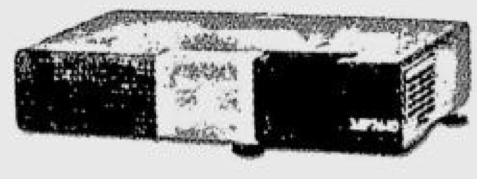

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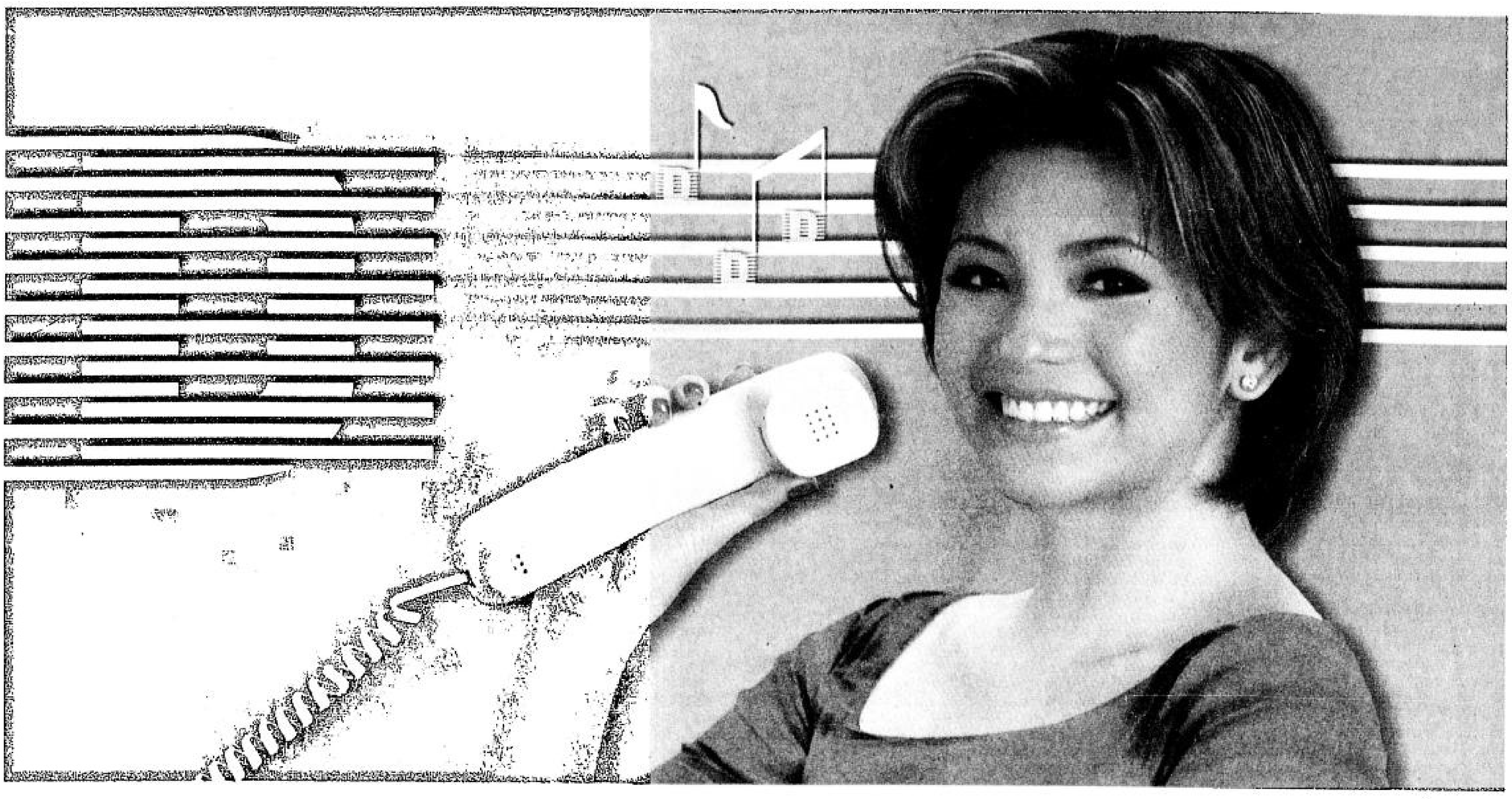
3M Innovation



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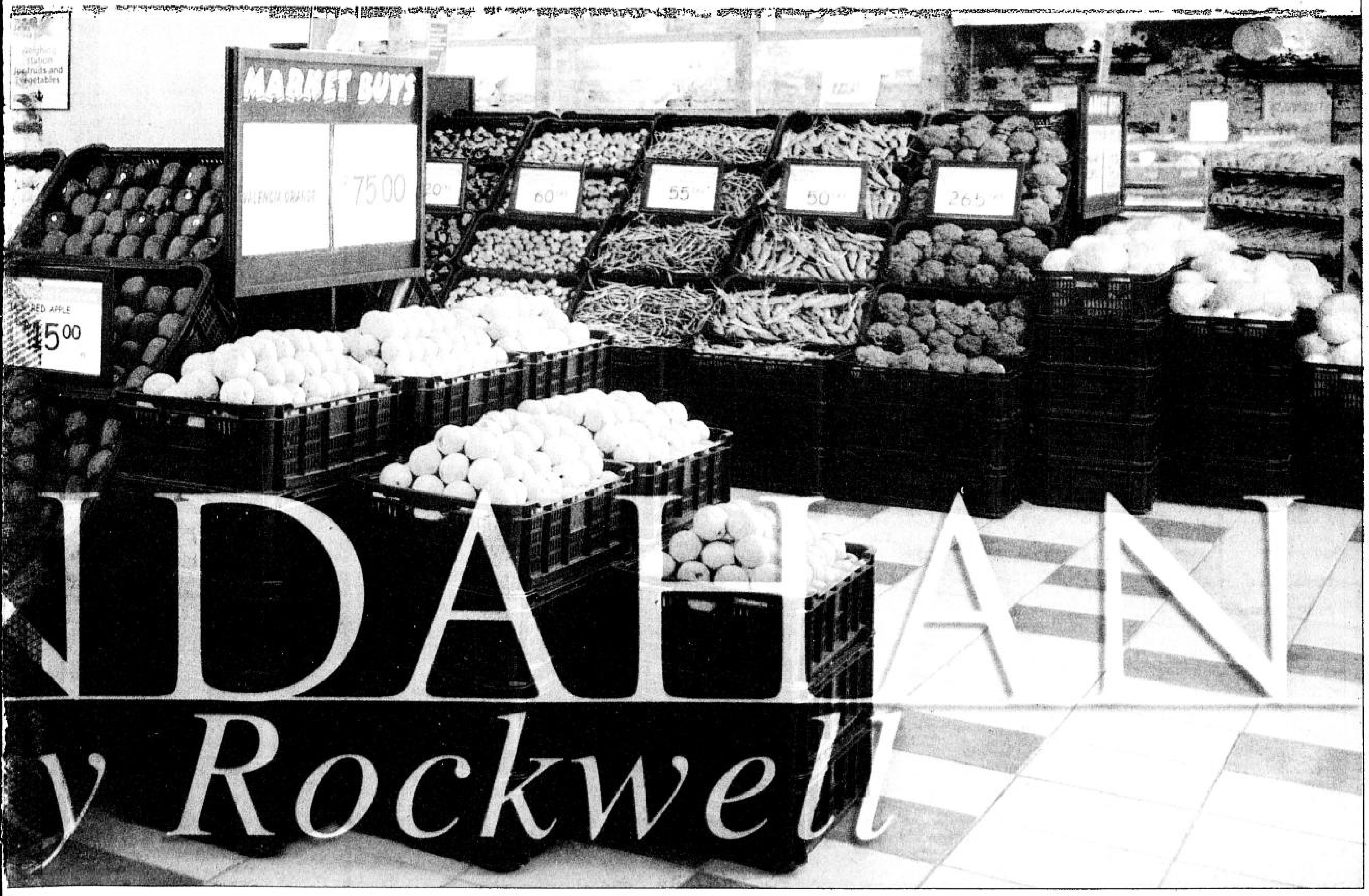
Rustan's Fresh at Power Plant, Rockwell Center



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mayalde@dataserve.aim.edu.ph

Please fax to: 894-1407, 817-9240
Name ____________ Nickname ____________
Company ____________ Tel/fax ____________
Position ____________ e-mail ____________
Mailing address ____________

Temps give French firms flexibility in tough times

PARIS—Long a cornerstone of the American labor force, the temporary worker—or temp—is on the rise in France.

Statistics show that the number of hours worked by temporary employees in France has more than doubled over the past five years.

Now this emerging pool of well over 500,000 temporary workers is proving a godsend to French firms that are finding it difficult to push through politically sensitive cuts to their permanent workforce.

Recent layoff plans by foods group Danone and British retailer Marks & Spencer have met with fierce condemnations from the French government and public, poisoning the atmosphere for firms seeking to make similar cuts.

As a result, French firms in a range of struggling sectors are keeping themselves competitive by trimming their temps.

Last week, the French car parts group Valeo announced it would target the roughly 17,000 temporary workers it employs to confront economic weakness in the United States and declines in European volumes.

"The number of temporary staff in Europe provides the group with a flexible tool with which to rapidly adapt the workforce," the company said.

The French telecoms equipment group Alcatel, under pressure to trim payrolls in response to a decline in demand for mobile phones, is in the process of slashing its own ample temporary workforce, avoiding the permanent cuts which could spark more government rebukes and public outcry.

This should come as no surprise—temps are always the first to go when profits are squeezed.

But experts say the increase in the size of the temporary workforce in France has provided its firms with flexibility they did not enjoy only a few years ago.

"Until the mid 1980s, there was almost no temporary work here in France," said Paul Swain, an economist in the employment analysis and policy division at the Paris-based Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development.

"Since then we have seen the government liberalize and witnessed steady growth in temporary employment."

Rise of the temp

There are two kinds of temporary worker in France—those on fixed short-term contracts and those called "interim" workers, which come in large part from temporary work agencies.

France trails European countries like Spain in the number of workers on fixed short-term contracts, but has emerged as a world leader over the past few years in the number of temps or interim workers.

According to the latest figures available from the International Confederation of Temporary Work Businesses in Brussels, France ranks No. 3 worldwide in terms of temporary work volume, behind the United States and Britain.

Data from the French Confederation of Temporary Work Businesses show temporary work volumes, measured in terms of equivalent full-time jobs, doubled in France between 1996 and 2000, outpacing growth in other European countries.

Temporary workers represented 2.1 percent of the total workforce in France last year, up from 0.7 percent in 1993.

In the first quarter of this year, growth has tapered off slightly, reflecting downturns in certain sectors like telecommunications and food/agriculture, which has been hit by the mad cow and foot-and-mouth crises.

"The first quarter has been below our expectations," said Denis Pennel at Manpower France, the country's second largest temporary work agency. "We are seeing what looks like a temporary down-blip in the French economy."

Labor market reform

Labor reforms in recent years have made it more advantageous for French firms to use temporary workers, ensuring steady growth rates for the industry.

These reforms have also made French corporations, and hence the French economy, more nimble.

Since 1997, French economic growth has consistently outpaced that of the traditional European powerhouse, Germany, where temporary work volumes are comparatively weak.

"There has been a collection of piecemeal reforms that together have created more flexibility," said Nicolas Sobczak, senior European economist at Goldman Sachs in Paris.

"The strategy in France has been very comparable to the Netherlands at the end of the 1980s even if it is not as explicit."

Sobczak said incentives have been put in place to increase more flexible forms of employment such as temporary and part-time work.

Cuts in employer social contributions and reductions in red tape have also cut labor costs, while legislation to trim the workweek to 35 hours has been accompanied by a relaxation of rules governing other work practices.

These reforms have partly offset the difficulties inherent for French firms wishing to cut their permanent payrolls. Under French law, firms must consult with union representatives before making any job cuts.

Even when they do, as in the case of Danone, public and political resistance and lengthy negotiations on the terms of dismissal can delay the implementation.

Earlier this month, Alcatel chair Serge Tchuruk estimated that layoffs of permanent staff took about six months longer to push through in France when compared to the United States.

Reuters

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Being . . .

(From page C8)

assistance and a Christmas party open to all dependents from 6 months to 12 years old.

Ecop also noted Jollibee's community outreach programs that are predominantly oriented toward kids and emphasizes on positive values.

Mabuhay Vinyl, on the other hand, was noted for its provision of child education and welfare programs in the day-care center which serve as a mini-library, story-telling time conducted by a youth group and appreciation lectures and exercises on environmental protection.

MVC also plans to offer scholarship grants to deserving students; meal and feeding programs for undernourished children; summer sports activities for the youth and leadership trainings.

IBM, meanwhile, has an IBM scholarship program for children of IBM employees, Kidsmart childhood learning program, donation of IBM desktop computer units to public schools and the IBM fund for community service.

Philex also made it to the list due to its programs extended to employees that impact on children such as health care, education and civic consciousness.

Philex offers a prenatal care and mother's class where comprehensive lectures on child care are given. It also offers free elementary and subsidized secondary education for employees' children.

CS Garment Inc., on the other hand, is one of a few companies in the Philippines which has a Code of Conduct that makes sure that no child labor is used in the manufacture of its garments.

It also has a child-friendly committee that provides awareness on child labor issues to its employees, suppliers, associates and the community.

Since St. Luke's is in the medical business, its programs for the children are oriented toward health social service and psychological health.

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Santander
Philippines, Inc.

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Ayala Avenue, 1226 Makati City

A subsidiary of:
Grupo
Santander Central Hispano

STATEMENT OF CONDITION

(As of March 23. 2001)

ASSETS		AMOUNT
Due from Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas	P	751,498,647
Due from Other Banks		2,909,216,117
Trading Account Securities		520,451,378
Investments in Bonds and Other Debt Instruments		738,427,315
Loans, Discounts & Advances-net		2,312,963,288
Equity Investments		5,000,100
Bank Premises, Furniture Fixtures & Equipment-net		29,051,435
Other Assets		244,671,136
TOTAL ASSETS		**P7,511,279,416**
LIABILITIES		
Demand Deposits	P	1,065,049,292
Time Deposits		3,405,259,840
Due to Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas		1,710,319
Outstanding Checks/Payment Orders		42,295,461
Other Liabilities		483,159,359
TOTAL LIABILITIES	**P**	**4,997,474,272**
CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		
Capital Stock	P	1,850,000,000
Capital Stock - Subscription Deposit		315,000,000
Surplus		348,135,347
Other Capital Accounts		669,797
TOTAL CAPITAL ACCOUNTS		**2,513,805,144**
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND CAPITAL ACCOUNTS	**P**	**7,511,279,416**
CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS		
Spot/Future Exchange Bought	P	12,459,902,945
Spot/Future Exchange Sold		12,834,799,262
Items Held for Safekeeping/Collaterals		3,733,996,216
Items Held in Trust		167,570,639
Other Contingent Accounts		1,640,787,306
TOTAL CONTINGENT ACCOUNTS	**P**	**30,837,056,368**

OTHER INFORMATION*
Compliance with Magna Carta Law:

Prescribed Ratio of Compliance	6% for Small Enterprise	2% for Medium Enterprise
Actual Compliance	6.1400%	2.4600%

Amount of Non-Performing Loans	P	133,438,000
Ratio of Non-Performing Loans to Total Loan Portfolio		4.65%
Amount of Classified Loans and Other Risk Assets	P	133,438,000
General provision for loan losses	P	15,159,159
Specific provision for loan losses	P	98,273,884
Return on Equity (ROE)		1.87%
Amount of DOSRI loans/advances	P	48,685,441
Ratio of DOSRI loans/advances to total loan portfolio		1.70%
Amount of Past Due DOSRI loans/Advances	P	–
Ratio of past due DOSRI loans/adv to total loan portfolio		–

*Amended to conform with Circular No.208 dated August 17, 1999 and Memorandum to all Banks dated November 29,1999.

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES)
CITY OF MAKATI)S.S

We, **Vicente B. Castillo** and **Agnes B. Santos** of the above-mentioned bank do solemnly swear that all matters set forth in the above statement of condition are true and correct to the best of our knowledge and belief.

(Sgd.) VICENTE B. CASTILLO
President

(Sgd.) AGNES B. SANTOS
Financial Controller

SUBSCRIBED AND SWORN to before me this **10th day of April 2001** affiants exhibiting to me their Residence Certificate No. 04170688, issued at Makati City on February 23, 2001 and Residence Certificate No.12010197, issued at Pasig City on February 28, 2001.

(Sgd.) Jose Luis V. Agcaoili
Notary Public
Until December 31, 2001
PTR No. 7726545
Date Issued: January 4.2001
Makati City
TIN 105-331-189

Doc. No. 180
Book No. IV
Page No. 37
Series of 2001

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Among the IT courses offered include Bachelor of Science in Computing, Advanced Diploma in Computing, e-Commerce or Computer Studies, Advanced Diploma in Computer Studies and International Diploma in Business Information Systems. Aside from IT courses, PurpleTrain.com also offers business courses such as BS in Business Administration and Advanced Diploma in Business Administration.

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"Rapid technological advances have spawned new ways of transacting business and delivering education. It is in this context that PurpleTrain.com is seen as an important contribution to the delivery of quality IT education. All Informatics Centers located in various parts of the country shall facilitate enrollment, payment of fees, submission of documents, examination and course counseling under the PurpleTrain.com online program," Riingen added.

Likewise, Informatics shall make available its school facilities including computers, library resources and Internet connectivity to students, professionals and corporations availing of PurpleTrain.com offerings.

Informatics is into IT training and education, with over 250 centers in 30 countries around the world. More information on Informatics' online education and training program are available at http://www.informatics.edu.ph or Purple Train's http://www.purpletrain.com

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TRADE Secretary Mar Roxas tries out the Meridian Broadbank Internet's high-speed data connectivity during the Cebu IT summit held recently at the Marriot Hotel. Roxas was a guest speaker during the conference.

Just how many transactions does an ATM network process

MEGALINK, the country's pioneer ATM consortium, has invested $1.4 million to upgrade its switch solution to the Oasis Information Switching Technology (IST) ~~software~~ running on a Stratus Continuum hardware with the latest PA RISC 8500 chip. The migration comes as the ATM consortium processes a growing volume of as much as 400,000 switched ATM and point-of-sale transactions in one day.

According to MegaLink general manager Cris Santillan, the recent migration to the new solution will also enable the ATM consortium to plot its course into the B2B e-commerce arena.

"The new switch is a more powerful and more robust solution that will support 24 by 7 operations on a fault tolerant open system architecture. This will serve as a great boon to our member banks, member institutions and cardholders," said Santillan.

She added that its flexible architecture would allow the ATM consortium to easily accommodate new service connections and introduce new delivery channels. New services are expected to be launched within the year, as well as the enhancement of current services that include PhoneLink, PayLink on Point of Sale devices and the Debit Bills Payment scheme.

MegaLink's speedy migration to the new system took just eight months from the time it was decided to acquire the new fault tolerant solution. While this upgrade involves a shift from a proprietary Stratus VOS Operating System to HPUX Unix Operating System, MegaLink retained its hardware choice with Stratus which ensures fault tolerance via fully redundant hardware—literally having two of each and every system component—both running the same operations at the same time. Should any piece fail, the system will continue to operate without any failure or degradation in performance.

Since both duplex components are simultaneously performing the same functions, no special handling or even slight disruption in service will be necessary. MegaLink's new configuration consists of two fault tolerant Stratus Continuum machines running Oasis IST/Switch software and Oracle Database Management System on HPUX Operating System. HP Openview and Hypercom IENView compose the Network Management System.

"We strive to embody best of the best standards and operating principles in support of the strategic directions laid out through the management of our CEOs," said Santillan. MegaLink's rotating leadership among the CEOs of member banks has provided a unique decision-making advantage for the ATM consortium. The top-level inputs have allowed the ATM consortium to align its strategies with the needs of the industry.

"The migration to the new solution has reaped almost immediate benefits for the consortium. MegaLink switch capacity for processing transactions per second has increased more than tenfold. This means faster processing of transactions, especially during peak days like paydays," says Santillan. "Because of the improved communications and monitoring facilities, MegaLink is easily able to detect bank connections encountering some processing problems like high rejection rates or slow turnaround times, enabling us to alert the banks immediately so they can investigate and fine-tune their system and connection."

"To date, it has resulted in a marked improvement in overall approval rates. Approval rates are measurements of approved transactions versus all transactions exclusive of the rejects due to wrong PINs or insufficient balance," explained Santillan.

She added that the availability of bank connections through the new switch had also improved with the implementation of centralized communications and monitoring facilities, and the adoption of TCP/IP for more transaction-intensive connections.

"We work to ensure that our member banks' investment in the network is optimized through the wise management of the resources available to us," Santillan said.

This has further allowed the network to charge the lowest switch fees and enabled their member banks to participate fully in other switched services.

HONDA

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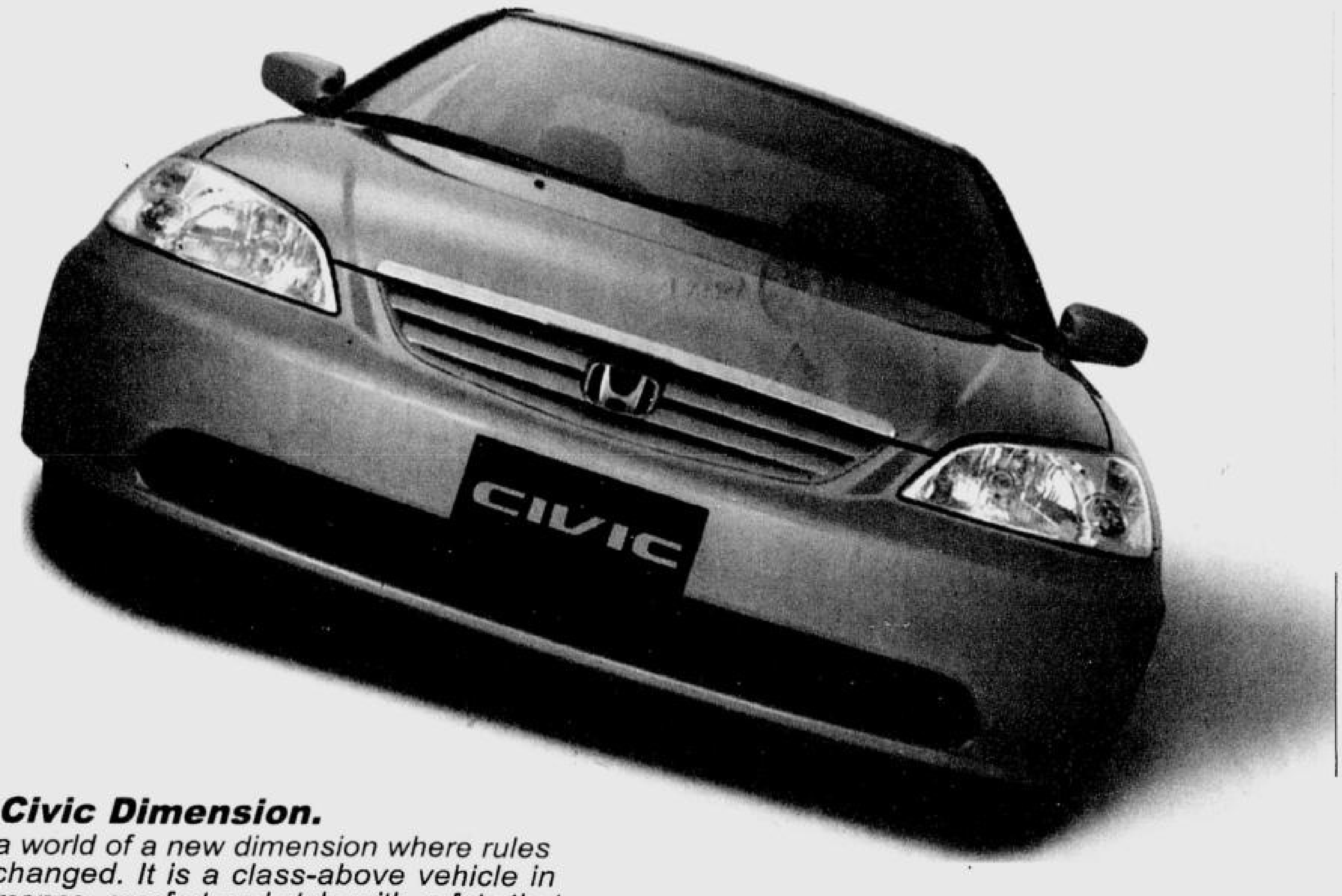

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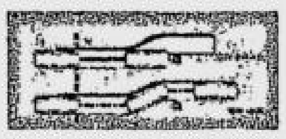

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THE WORD FROM LONDON

Europe takes a look at RP once more

ONE of the first official acts that President Macapagal-Arroyo made shortly after assuming office was to appoint a number of Special Envoys in key capitals around the world. One of these is Ambassador Cesar B. Bautista, Special Presidential Envoy for Europe and concurrently Ambassador to the United Kingdom, to Ireland and to Iceland.

In this special interview with Romeo P. Virtusio, Ambassador Bautista outlines some of the major thrusts of the Macapagal administration for Europe.

Q: What has been the general reaction in Europe to the accession to the Presidency of President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo?

A: It is one of new hope . . . a fresh start for the Philippines which the Europeans are pleased to see us embarking on. For the Filipinos in this region, it signals a new optimism that things will get better for their folks back home. They now feel that here is one country where they have, once again, shared values. They are more comfortable working with partners that share their cherished values. However, it is a very competitive period and a very competitive region. They expect solid results within the immediate future or else their attention will be turned to other opportunities in other countries.

Q: Could you please outline the main thrust of the Arroyo administration with respect to promoting trade and commerce between the Philippines and the UK and the rest of Europe?

A: The Philippines in Europe is like the proverbial small fish in a big lake. President Arroyo's new leadership provides the window of opportunity (albeit for a short time only) for the Philippines to be better appreciated here as one that is truly and strongly committed to the genuine improvement, especially of the poor sectors of our society. Therefore, all Filipinos, (government, business and the general citizenry) must fast-track reforms and embrace a culture of good governance, corporate responsibility and sensible exercise of electoral prerogatives.

It is said that human resource is our strongest asset; however, it is not sufficient ingredient for success; we need to develop the right business and political environment as well.

The Arroyo administration is going back to the basics of liberalization, privatization and investment-friendly policies that will benefit the Filipinos. President Arroyo is underscoring the need for greater transparency in governance, and for a sense of fair play for consumers, traders and investors, local and foreigners, alike.

The President is aware that in the last decade, we were able to wean ourselves away from the dominance of the Americans and the Japanese. This is a fortunate development since it is always preferable to spread our bets over many possibilities. Furthermore, this insulates us somewhat from the economic slowdown that is now being experienced by the USA and Japan.

Europe, therefore, must be a target region for our growth. If our position in Europe can be improved even by a small degree, it will have a big positive impact on the Philippine economy. We need to devote more attention, more time to improving our relationship with Europe.

Q: Could you please give us a broad picture of Philippine-Europe trade?

A: In 2000 Exports, the order of importance of our various markets are: North America including USA, 31 percent; Europe, 20 percent; Northeast Asia excluding Japan, 17 percent; SE Asia, 14 percent; Japan, 13.5 percent; rest of the world, 5 percent.

Compare these figures with those in the early '90s when the USA accounted for 45 percent and Japan 20 percent.

In terms of investments, Europeans have been the leading investors for the past five years, again replacing our traditional partners.

Q: What special instructions did you receive early on from President Arroyo?

A: President Arroyo took the initiative of appointing Special Presidential Envoys such as myself to jumpstart the movement to regain the confidence of our major partners around the world. This is being achieved by meeting officials of governments at the highest levels possible, leaders of their business sectors, and the Filipino communities . . . with the message of the President's new thrusts and policies that will see the country moving up again in its social and economic drives.

We are due to meet together soon to report on our accomplishments and to identify possibilities that will further bolster the program of her administration. It is also important to identify continuing concerns of those that we have contacted (mostly carryovers from recent past) so that these can be addressed promptly for Filipinos back home.

The Embassy has a unique mission of increasing awareness, respect and cooperation (ARC) by the host country for the Philippines and the Filipinos. Only by heightened ARC, can we expect to get more Britishers buying our products, investing in our economy, putting more assistance in our development projects, supporting us in our diplomatic initiatives, etc. In other words, only with ARC can the embassy assist to improve the lot of the poor Filipinos back home.

FORMER Trade Secretary Cesar B. Bautista presenting his credentials at the Court of St. James.

Q: How do you work with the private sector?

A: In line with our ARC drive, we work with the Philippine private sectors such as those in education, in culture in NGOs, but most especially in business. We try to develop their networking so that the proper projection about the Philippines can be achieved. For instance, during my trips to European countries, I seek the advice of the Filipino chairmen of bilateral business councils to identify issues to be raised, persons to meet, etc.

Q: How has your experience, first, as chair of Unilever in the Philippines, and then as Secretary of the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) helped you in your current work as Ambassador?

A: My experience as previous Secretary of DTI and chair/president of a major multinational company has certainly been most useful in making the necessary connections and initiative around Europe. There is always a fair chance that I will meet VIPs whom I have worked with in my previous life, or discuss topics that have been tackled in the past, etc.

In a huge dynamic diplomatic corps, a measure of informal recognition is accorded to those who held, say, senior Cabinet or business positions in the past.

Q: What does our country have to do to enhance our economic and trade relationship with Europe?

A: The challenge of raising the overall economic and trade relationship between the Philippines and Europe is not peculiar to this region. It exists vis-a-vis all of our other partners. The main difference is that in Europe, there is much more potential for growth. Europe has the capacity to be our No.1 export market!

But we have to do much homework. We have to be constantly aware that there are similarly minded countries out there—with the very same ambitions as ours, attracting trade, investments, tourism, assistance, to hasten economic development. However, we have the advantage of having superior human resources. Our political and social institutions are strong, tested time and again, and proving each time that they are the ones that suit our people, our culture and our needs. Our charter is clear and our challenge unchanged—how shall we, how can we, get our business, administrative environment right.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is doing precisely that—getting our act together. As an economist and former government executive who has a firm grasp of the broad situation and a clear vision of what ought to be done, she truly inspires and leads us.

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   b. A Pacific Internet Tele-sales representative shall process the account and call the customer to give his/her user name and password after faxing or submitting the complete requirements.
8. Internet access excess usage will be charged P66.00 per hour or P16.50 per 15-minute block.
9. Non-payment of monthly dues, if any, shall result to suspension. Suspension within the promo period forfeits free months from this promo.
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This was exactly the same predicament faced by Paul Agcaoili when he decided to cleave through the waves of other large-scale Internet service providers and put up Ezbee.com—a company that provides unlimited hours of full access to the worldwide Web at an unbelievably low monthly rate.

"With Ezbee.com, you can practically surf, chat and even download huge graphic files without worrying about going over your limit," says Agcaoili, webmaster of Ezbee.com.

Agcaoili had a couple of special advantages because he had worked in a huge multinational as well as earned an American education at the prestigious West Point Academy. Both experiences helped Agcaoili to think without borders and map out a plan to be an entrepreneur. After expanding his horizons abroad, Agcaoili decided to come back to the Philippines to turn his teenage fondness for computers into a service that could help other small businesses.

Pooling the resources he earned from his experience in the corporate world (Agcaoili worked with Citibank for three years), Agcaoili teamed up with cousin Francis Villareal and formed Ezbee.com, an Internet service provider aiming to break through the cutthroat competition among other ISPs by providing unlimited Internet access for as little as P1,100 a month. Ezbee.com also offers a wide range of Internet access services as well as Internet solutions for personal or business applications.

Proving that you don't need a whole army to run your own business, the two-man team of Agcaoili and Villareal handles everything from marketing to accounting to troubleshooting. Overhead costs are therefore at a minimum, a plus that's passed on to their customers.

"Everything is completely computerized," explains Agcaoili. "We can keep tabs on all the details of our business from the number of subscribers to the needs of new clients. Even our billing system is hi-tech. We don't use snail mail to send billing statements but use the Internet—it's faster, more efficient and we're sure the account statements reach our clients on time."

To push its edge over other competitors, Ezbee.com also continues to upgrade the effectiveness of its services—ranging from installation, troubleshooting, as well as website maintenance and development. IBM, Agcaoili is quick to point out, is actually key to Ezbee.com's high connectivity, fast connection and excellent service.

TWO-MAN/ C11

Being child-friendly makes good business sense

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

AMID globalization and increasing incidence of poverty, a new breed of corporations has emerged. These are the corporations that are not merely profitable but socially responsible as well.

The Employers Confederation of the Philippines recently recognized six of these firms, specifically for their programs, policies and practices attuned to the needs and welfare of children.

Named child-friendly firms were textile firm CS Garments Inc., fast-food giant Jollibee Foods Corp., IBM Philippines, Mabuhay Vinyl Corp., Philex Mining Corp. and St. Luke's Medical Center.

Ecop vice president Maria del Carmen Zaldarriaga said during the recent recognition ceremonies that the country needs more companies that are committed to protecting the rights of the children since they are the future of the country.

"We are doing this not for our selves but for the future of our country—for our children and those who will come after them. They will inherit the legacies we have painstakingly built," she says.

The Ecop Child Friendly Firm Recognition Project was launched in May 1999 with the support of the International Labor Organization.

It is a recognition process where a company or any recognized entity based in the Philippines voluntarily submits itself to an external and independent evaluation by two screening bodies formed by Ecop.

The recognition project exemplifies a concrete effort on the part of the business sector to fight child labor. By recognizing child-friendly firms, Ecop hopes to contribute to efforts aimed at increasing the awareness of other enterprises and inspiring them to follow suit.

Ecop adds that it is in any firm's interest to realize that being "child-friendly" makes good business sense.

The first awardees were semiconductor manufacturing firm PSI Technologies, ABS-CBN Foundation and Tupperware Philippines.

The child-friendly firms were chosen based on the following criteria:

- Adherence to government laws and regulations, especially on core labor standards.
- Non-employment of child labor, in policy and practice.
- Proof of advocacy against child exploitation and abuse.
- Willingness to undertake joint activities with Ecop and other organizations in the promotion of children's rights and welfare.

The screening committee included Carmela Torres, National Program Coordinator of ILO-IPEC, Rina Jimenez-David, columnist, Philippine Daily Inquirer; Maragtas Amante, dean, UP School of Labor and Industrial Relations, and Cecilia Oebanda, president, Visayan Forum Foundation.

Jollibee was cited for its employee benefits program that includes a birthday party discount for dependents 12 years and below, educationa

BEING/ C8

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International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
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DYVERS Publications is conducting an "Effective Business Writing" seminar-workshop on April 26 and 27, 2001 at Horizon Edsa Hotel Boni Avenue corner Edsa, Mandaluyong.

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Two-man

(From page C10)

A virtual speed freak; Agcaoili likes to get everything done twice as fast with no loss to efficiency—the exact reason why he chose IBM over other brands. "We know that IBM is very reliable," he explains. "We were using clones before, but after weeks of mishaps and overheating, we immediately shifted to IBM. Now, everything's running smoothly. With IBM, we know we've got our money's worth. In addition, we are able to get very good technical support from IBM."

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Despite the flood of dotcoms flourishing in the country today, Agcaoili is confident that Ezbee.com will sail smoothly past its competitors.

"Our strengths lie in the fact that we are able to offer quicker solutions because we concentrate on fewer clients—usually numbering around 100 to 125 at any one time—so we can attend to the usual Internet problems," says Agcaoili.

"We also offer more than just Internet services," adds Villareal, the company's designated operations manager. "We also provide a cash-remittance service that allows OFWs (overseas Filipino workers) to send and receive money to and from relatives or friends through the Internet. We also offer other services like Web page design and Web space hosting. We also aim to promote Filipino talents in other countries by putting up an online auction specifically for budding Filipino artists who want to sell their paintings through the Net."

Although a self-confessed workaholic, Agcaoili takes time out of his busy schedule to pump iron twice a week at his favorite gym. And, when not attending to his thriving business, Agcaoili plays the role of "Mr. Mom" to his infant son, Paolo Luis.

From joining the ranks of the nation's soldiers to soughing it out in the corporate world—Agcaoili's goals and ideals have never changed through the years—he has always wanted to serve his countrymen. Proving that you do not have to empty your pockets of hard-earned cash to have high-quality and efficient service, Agcaoili is confident that Ezbee.com will continue to hold its own against bigger dotcom companies—allowing the Filipino *masa* and small companies to wire up with the rest of the world at affordable rates.

Bankers . . .

(From page C1)

But they admitted the ownership issue dogging the country's eighth largest lender is already affecting the bank's financial health and the morale of its employees.

"Everything is put on hold. Our financial transactions are kept to a minimum. We hope the government resolves the ownership issue so the bank can move on," says Kilayco in an earlier interview.

He said the management is having a hard time acting on any large financial transactions for fear that these could be later questioned. He refuses to give details though on these transactions.

Both officials, however, deny rumors that Cojuangco had threatened to pull out San Miguel Corp.'s P15 billion worth of deposits in UCPB if the government does not hand over a decision favorable to him regarding the coconut levy funds.

As of the fourth quarter last year, the bank's total assets is worth P120 billion while deposits stood at P87 billion.

"It is up to the court to decide. We are not clinging to our positions. What we are after here is for the bank to have a direction so it can finally move on," says the UCPB chair.

The Supreme Court is expected to decide very soon if the PCGG or shareholders on record would vote on the sequestered shares.

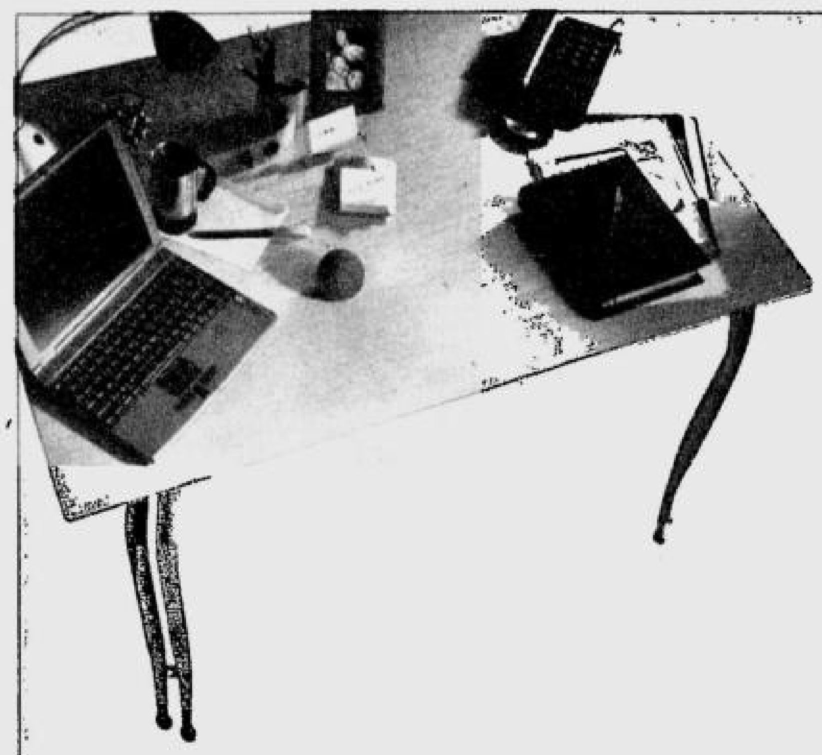
If government wins, Kilayco will be replaced by former Solidbank president and Metrobank vice chair Deogracias Vistan Jr. while Tan would have to give way to Francisco del Rosario, former vice chair of Development Bank of the Phils. and ex vice chair of Government Service Insurance System.

In the government-preferred scenario, also to be appointed to UCPB board are Conrado Limcaoco, spokesperson of the People's Power Coalition; political analyst Alex Magno, and Maria Jose Rufino of the Lakas-NUCD party.

Also in the list are Manuel Valdehuesa, Helen Osias, Dunga Lim, Francisco Lejano, Rolando Golez, Juan Carlos, Teresita Baltazar, Romeo Arceo Jr., and two farmers' representatives Oscar Santos and Efren Villaseñor.

UCPB together with a 47-percent bloc in San Miguel Corp. were sequestered by the Presidential Commission on Good Government created during the time of former President Aquino.

These assets were believed to have been ill-gotten because they were bought or put up using the oppressive coconut levy funds collected by lowly coconut farmers during the time of Marcos.



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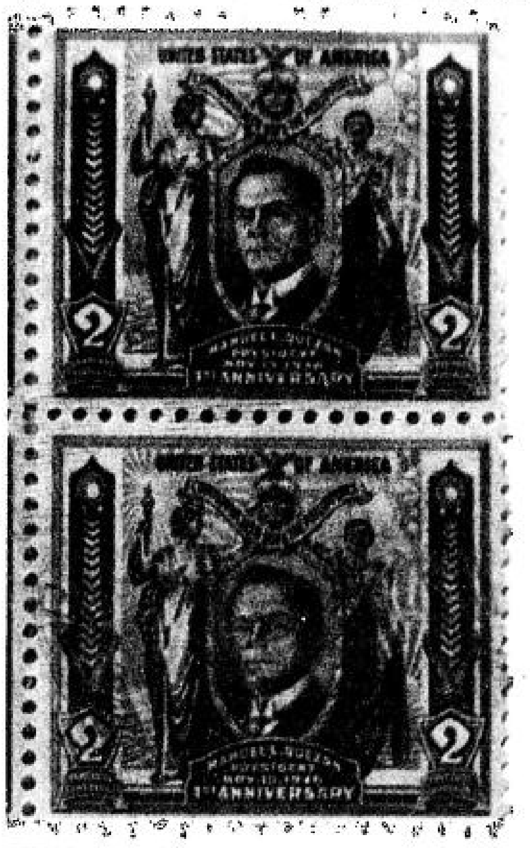

STAMPS marking the first anniversary of the Philippine Commonwealth

The stamp of history

BY ALEX Y. VERGARA
PHOTOS BY ROGER CARPIO

WHAT'S old, historically significant and priceless? The head of Spanish Queen Isabel II.

Not the actual one, of course, but a crude profile of Her Majesty printed on the first set of stamps issued by Spanish colonial rulers for domestic use in the Philippines. The faded stamp sans perforations is now valued at $100,000.

The year was 1854, 14 years after the very first stamp came out in England and three years after the first bank named after the very same queen was established in the Philippines.

El Banco Español Filipino de Isabel II, a pioneer in Southeast Asia, eventually evolved and became the Bank of the Philippine Islands, arguably the country's biggest bank today.

To mark its 150th year, BPI is holding a philatelic exhibit at the Ayala Museum until April 28. BPI's commemorative stamp, a miniature version of the first banknote called *pesos fuertes*, is among the pieces on display.

Interestingly, it was also BPI, under its old name, which issued the banknote in 1852. The stamp will be on sale until April 30, three months after the Philippine Postal Corp. first issued it.

"It will be the first time such a big assembly of stamps are being featured locally," says Veronica Tapia-Merk, BPI's senior vice president for corporate communications. "We intend to come up with other meaningful activities

THE STAMP/ p.D2

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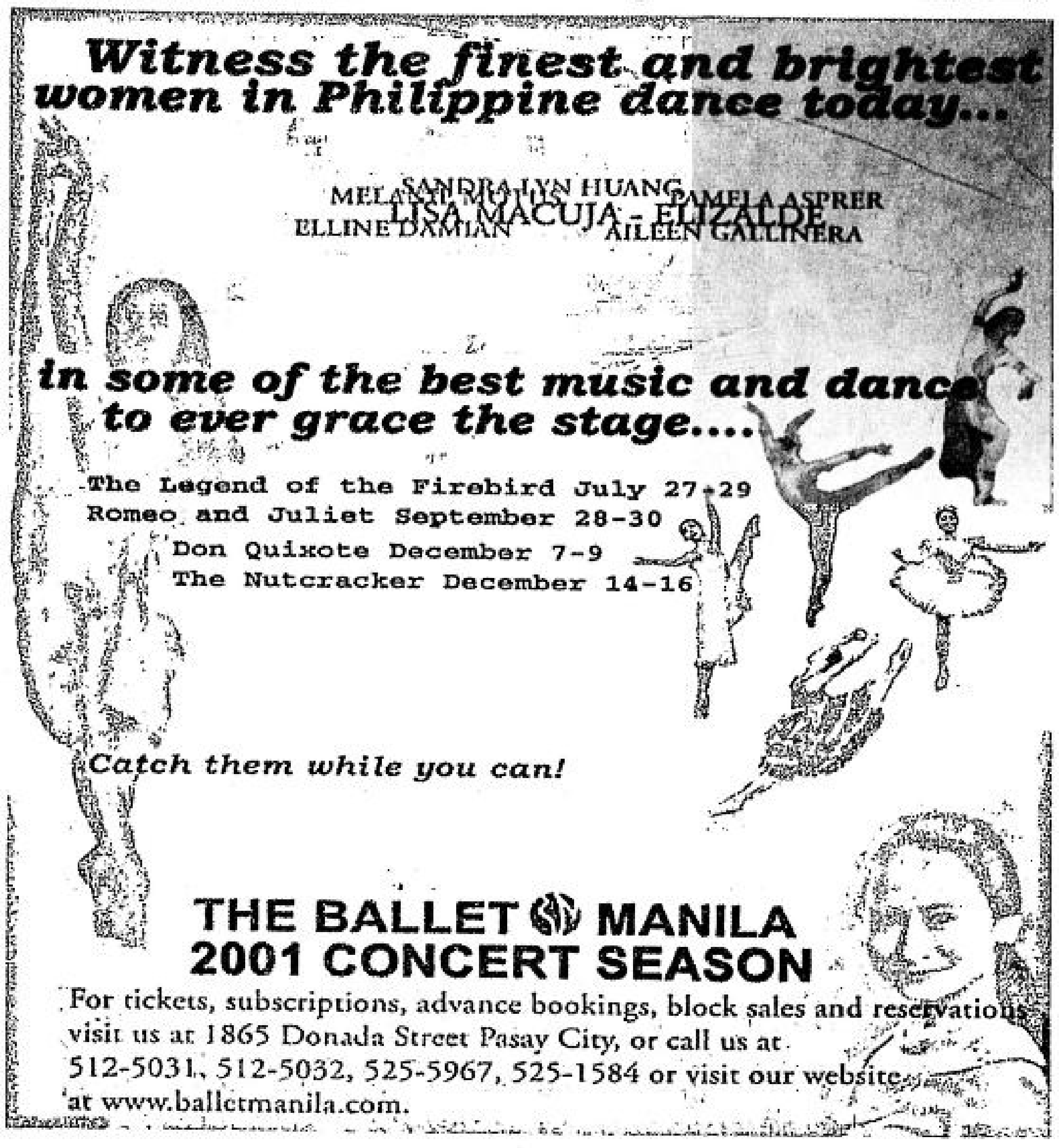

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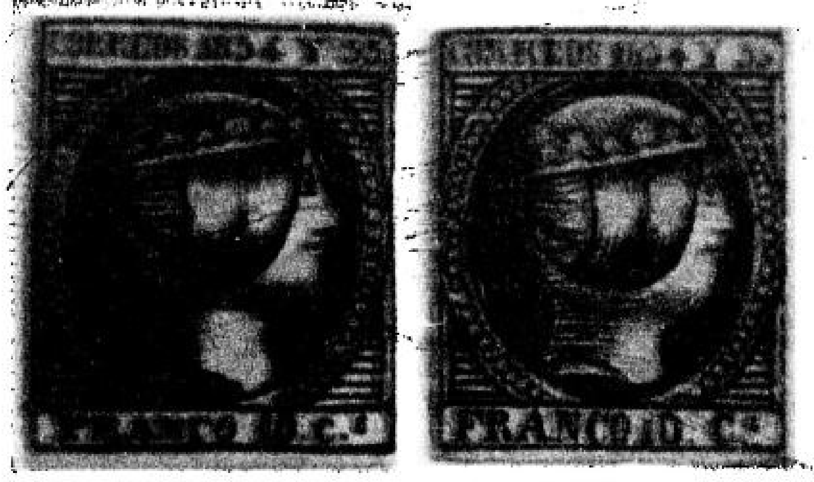
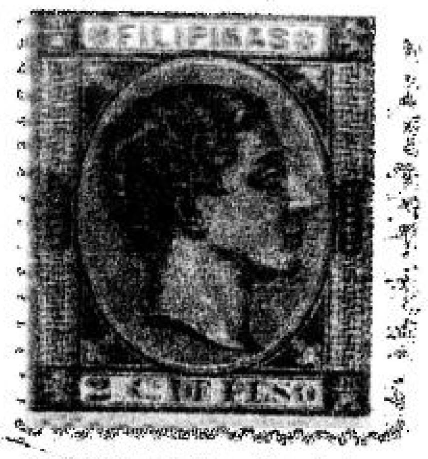


HER MAJESTY'S HEAD. First stamps of Queen Isabel II issued by the Spanish colonial government in the Philippines in 1854.



NO INDIO, HE. One of the first perforated stamps with the word Filipinas below it.

The stamp of history

A philatelic exhibit promises to be a rare breathtaking survey on history and the art of the stamp

CHANGE OF MASTERS. The country's new colonizers issued US stamps with the word Philippines printed over them during the early American period.

(From page D1)

for the rest of the year."

The display is also made possible through the assistance of the Philippine Philatelic Federation, the International Philippine Philatelic Society and the Philippine Postal Corp.

Side by side with the crudely drawn Queen Isabel are refined versions of the stamp used by Spanish colonial subjects in the Philippines, Cuba and Puerto Rico in their correspondence with *peninsulares* based in the mother country.

Royal sycophants were said to have kept the unflattering image of the queen from landing on her desk. Heads would have probably rolled if that had happened.

Perforated stamps

The exhibit also features the first perforated stamps issued in 1872 with the word Filipinas written below them. Several sections of the exhibit are also devoted to the early American and Commonwealth periods.

The Philippine Postal Corp. also assembled an evolution of stamps grouped under the Republic period. A number of postwar stamps are featured with their original artwork rendered a thousand times larger.

Participating collectors include Stanley Chan, Pio Rodriguez, Anton Claro, Vicente Ramos and BPI senior vice president Tito Legasto. Many of their prized collections, particularly stampless envelopes now brown and brittle with age, have won international recognition.

"Before the advent of stamps, letters were simply postmarked," says Chan. "A letter in the olden days also meant bad news even before the recipient could open it."

Call it today's version of a collect call, the recipient not the sender usually paid for the cost of postage back then. The practice slowly changed with the introduction of stamps.

The practice of stamp collecting has also evolved through the years. Beginners used to add only used stamps in their collections, in the belief that they're more valuable with their requisite postmarks.

That's not always the case, says Ludy Cubelo, manager of the Philippine Postal Corp.'s philatelic section. In some cases, stamps in their mint or unused condition are more valuable than the postmarked variety.

And, oh, don't bother to unglue those stamps from their envelopes. Based on current trends, they're bound to appreciate more if left untouched.

"It all boils down to how rare these stamps have become," she adds. "And since letters are also considered part of our written history, a growing number of collectors are keeping the stamps stuck to their envelopes."

Of course, the idea of someday reaping a windfall for their efforts has sustained collectors like Chan to keep on adding or fine-tuning their collections. He had to sell his earlier collection of Philippine stamps during the American period in favor of his present pieces.

"It's difficult to sustain collections that span different periods," he explains. "You stand a better chance of winning awards if you limit it [collection] to just one period. Of course, I've chosen to keep and expand the rarer, older pieces."

Auctions

Ironically, the group of collectors sourced most of the country's rare and vintage stamps from auctions abroad, particularly in Europe and the US.

Various philatelic societies all over the country also meet regularly to exchange notes and swap stamps.

Chan cites several reasons: Since not too many people were literate back then, very few wrote and exchanged letters regularly. At the same time, it took letters months or perhaps years to arrive from one destination to another via bulky galleons.

Then there were no air conditioners, too. Letters that survived the country's humid climate were either burned or lost during all those wars.

Manila's cruel summers vis-à-vis Madrid's moderate winters are evident in Chan's collection. Envelopes, for example, sourced from Manila are more brown, their writings more smudged or faded than those from Madrid.

"I get excited every time I acquire a piece that's unique," he says.

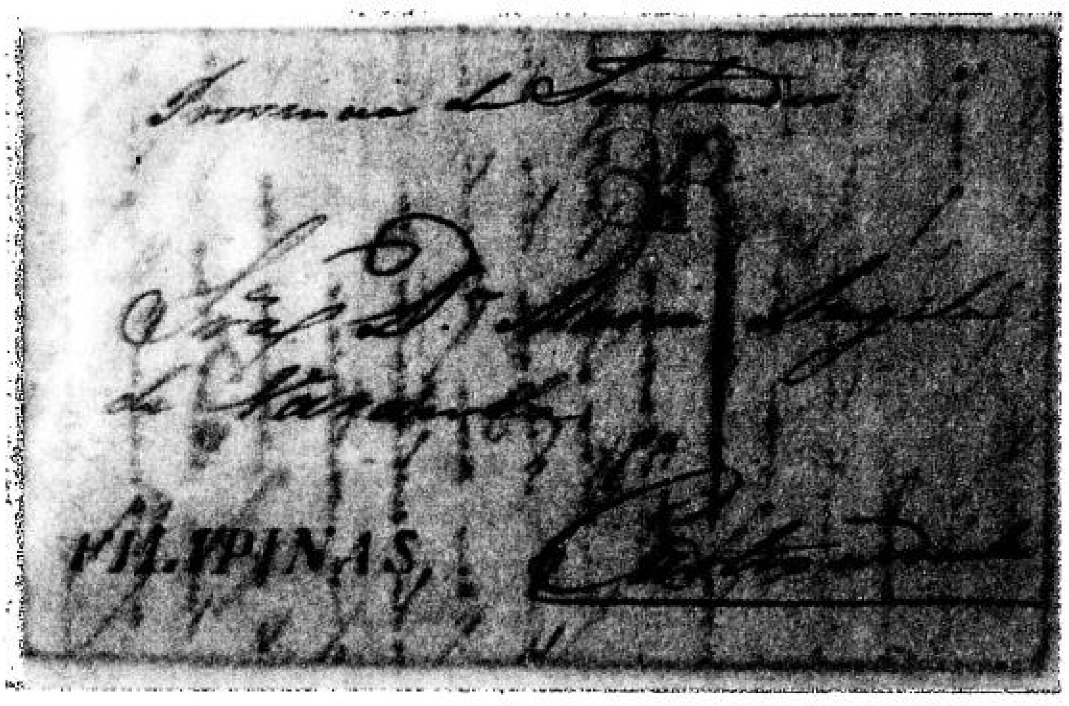
But perhaps more than the prospect of earning money from their prized possessions, most philatelists share a love for the visual arts and an unquenchable thirst for history.

"I was very poor in history," says Claro, "until I got into stamp collecting. It has been 25 years since my first piece."

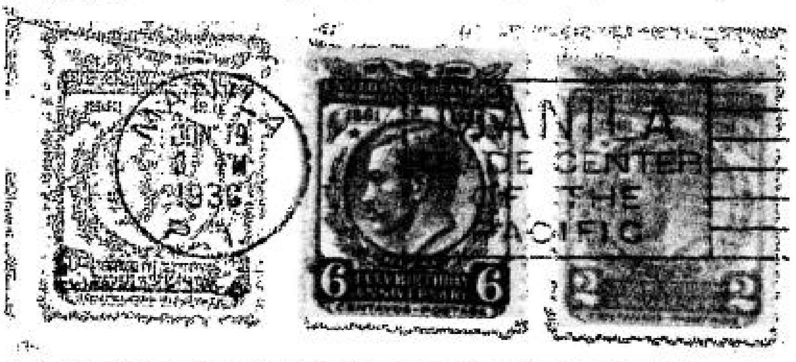
Some men collect cars, while some are into paintings. Of course, there are those, like a deposed president we all know, who keep a stable of crafty mistresses.

Chan and company also collect women—among other stuff. The only difference is most of them are long dead, their images confined forever within the four corners of a stamp.

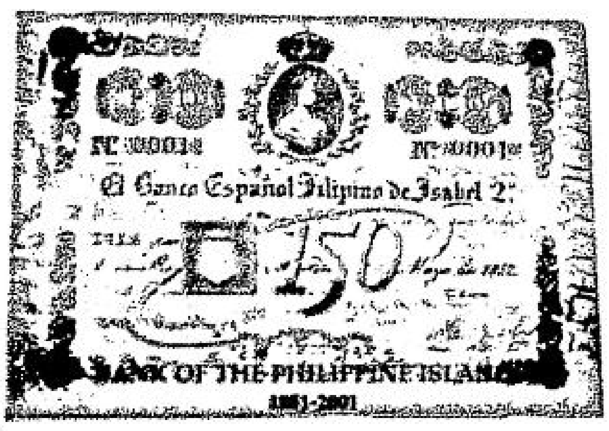
E-mail the author at avergara@inquirer. com.ph



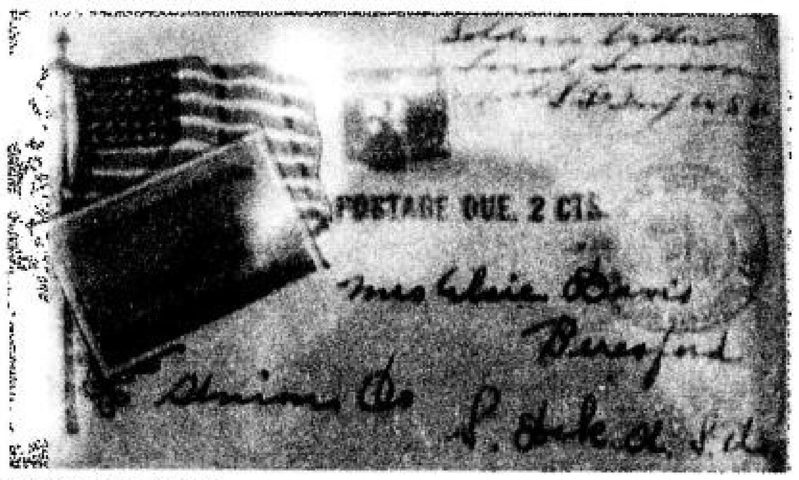
SIGNED, SEALED AND STAMPLESS. Pre-stamp era (1821-1842) letter from the Philippines to Spain via Isthmus de Suez



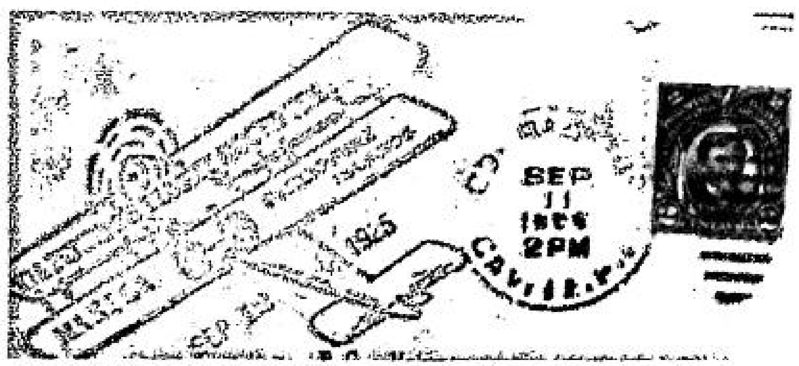
COMMONWEALTH-PERIOD stamps marking Rizal's 85th birth anniversary. Note the prominent position of the "United States of America" over the "Commonwealth of the Philippines."



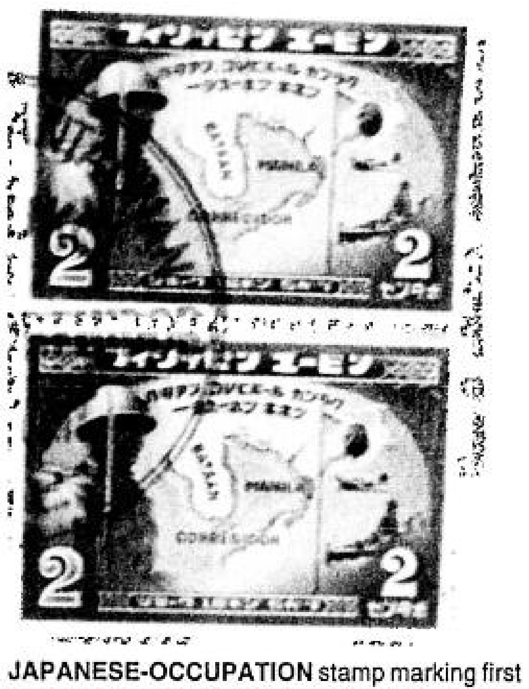
BPI'S commemorative stamp, a miniature version of the first banknote in the Philippines called *pesos fuertes*



US Military postcard



AMERICAN era stamp featuring image of national hero Jose Rizal



JAPANESE-OCCUPATION stamp marking first anniversary of the fall of Bataan and Corregidor

Lopez Museum holds lecture on antique ceramics

ORIENTAL ceramics enthusiast, researcher and author Cynthia Ongpin Valdes will talk on antique ceramics found in the Philippines on April 25, at noon, at the Executive Lounge of the Benpres Building (Ortigas Center, Mandaluyong). A portion of her talk will shed light on the various artifacts of the Calatagan excavation currently in the museum's collection.

The talk is part of the Lopez Memorial Museum's luncheon lecture series. Fee is P1,250 per person. This entitles the guest to a full lunch with one beverage of choice and a chance to win a raffle prize courtesy of the Lopez Museum Shop. Call Fanny San Pedro at 631-2417 or 449-2355.

The Luncheon Series is part of the Lopez Memorial Museum's effort at sharing its collection with the public. The topics dwell on aspects of Asian and Philippine art, culture and letters.

Today's women of Malolos . . .

(From page D4)

Since its organization a year ago, the Foundation marked the house where the 21 women had their school with a commemorative plaque. Articles on the women were published in major dailies. Dr. Tiongson and Dr. Regulus Tantoco, both direct descendants, are tasked to write a book detailing the lives of each of the 21 women. The Foundation chaired by Dr. Aldaba Lim plans to work toward improving tourism attractions of their city, the first being the new museum that they have opened in the premises of the Casa Real of Malolos.

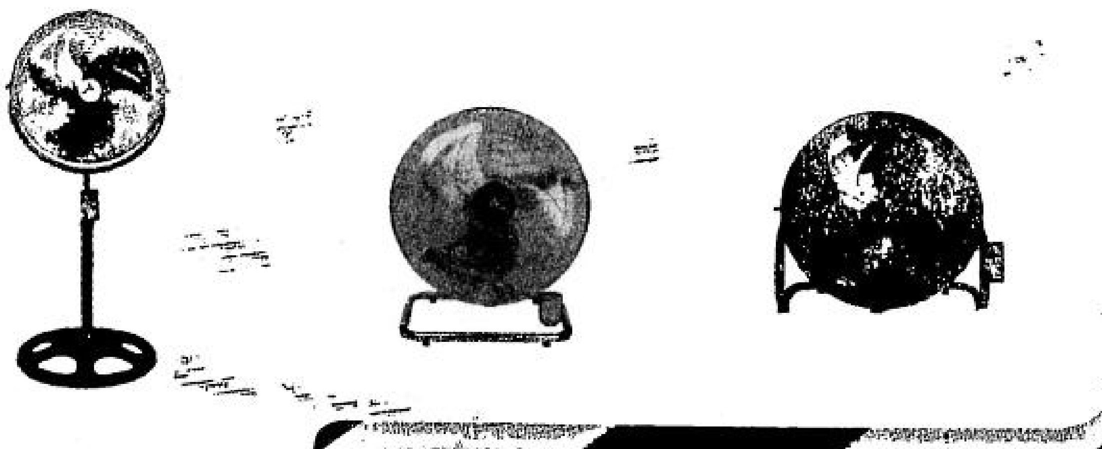
The recently inaugurated Museum of the Women of Malolos Foundation displays antique jewelry from the Pablo S. Trillana III family, a collection of antique jewelry from the home of Alberta Uitangcoy-Santos (the leader of the 21 women), and a collection of antique clothing gathered from the families of other descendants.

The present Casa Real is a structure with an inspiring history. Standing in the center of Malolos, its occupants and uses constantly changed during its 400-year history. It was alternately the Casa Real, the Ayuntamiento, Casa Tribunal del Pueblo, Casa Presidencia Municipal, Presidencia, the Municipal Hall and Pamahalaang Bayan. It did not stop there—a number of government offices moved in and out of the structure, remodeling it to suit their needs. After surviving remodeling and other constructions, the edifice was demolished in 1965 to give way to the commercialization of Malolos. Everyone thought that it was the end of the building.

When nothing but a few walls and some columns were left, the citizens of Malolos rose in protest. They stopped the demolition, managed to have the site declared a National Shrine, and 15 years later a replica of the original building was erected on the original site.

It is fitting that the Casa Real house the Women of Malolos Museum. Both show the tenacity of Maloleños to fight for what they believe in. The new link forged between the Casa Real and the Women of Malolos commemorates the courage, patriotism, and achievements of not only the 21 women, but it more importantly honors the patriotism and deep commitment to history that the people of Malolos continue to nurture to this day.

E-mail the author at afv@pacific.net.ph



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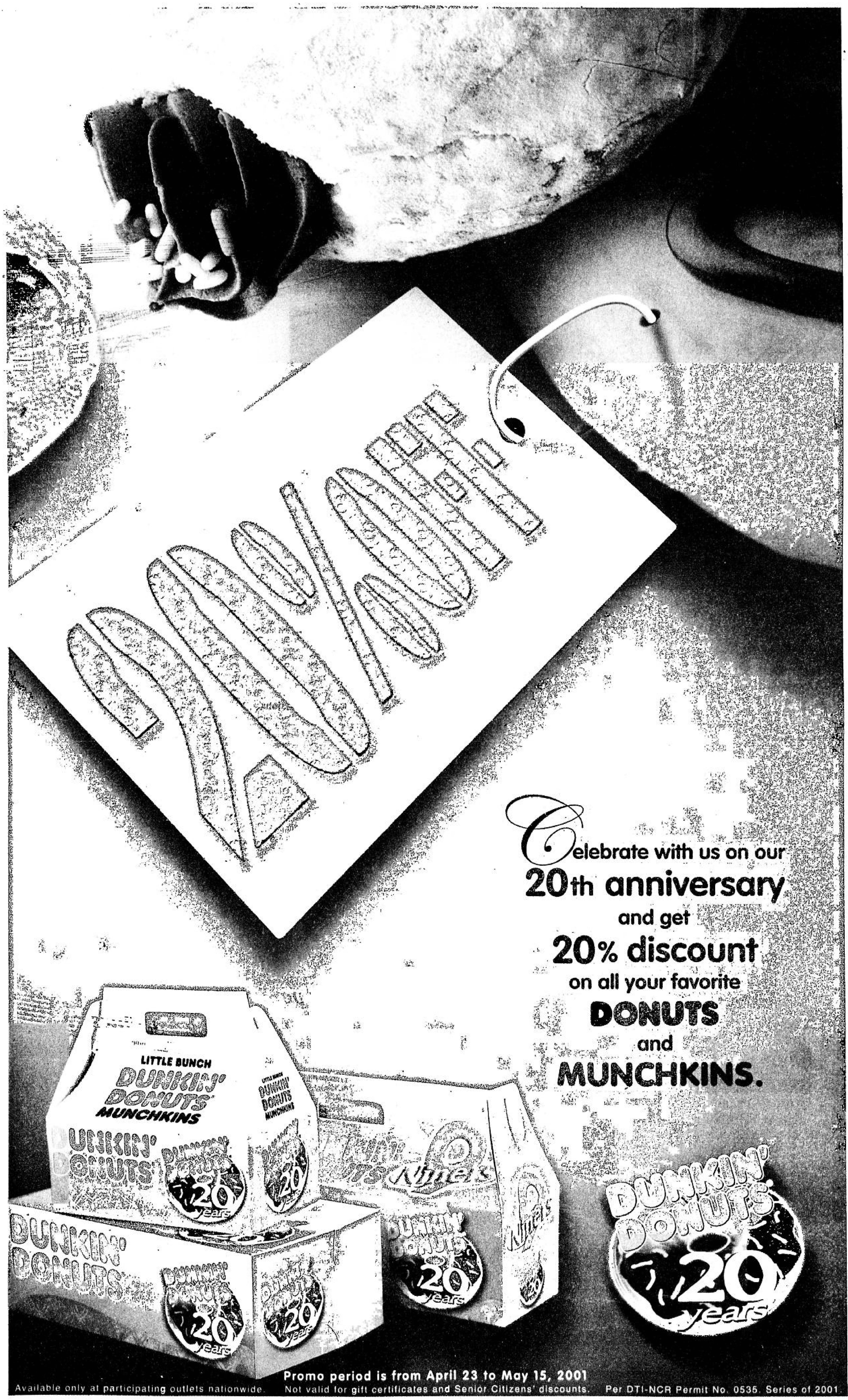
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SPACED OUT

Augusto F. Villalon

IN DECEMBER 1888, 21 women of Malolos wrote to their *cura paroco*, Fray Felipe Garcia, requesting permission to set up a night school at their own expense in one of their homes where they would hire a teacher so they could learn Spanish. The request was denied. Knowledge of the language would open up the *indios* to a world of progressive ideas. Determined to pursue their vision, they presented their petition once again in writing to Governor-General Valeriano Weyler during his visit to Malolos.

Putting the letter into historical context, it publicly asserted the personhood of the 21 women after many centuries of male-centered colonial rule. The ladies were from local *mestizo* families—the prominent, landed and wealthy *Sangleys* of Malolos. Their brave request for education was part of a concerted effort to reinforce a move among the liberal-minded *ilustrados* of the town to expose the abuses of the local friar who was the obstacle to the move in pushing for equal rights with Spanish citizens.

Nobody thought that women would write such a letter. It drew strong reaction from all sectors. The conservative Spanish forces condemned the letter in El Eco Franciscano and La Defensa, stating that Fray Garcia's denial of the request went against Royal orders to teach Spanish.

The Filipino and Spanish liberals, on the other hand, welcomed the letter. Dr. Nicanor Tiongson (a descendant of one of the 21 women) writes that "Graciano Lopez Jaena wrote in La Solaridaridad (February 1889) that it was a blow against those who would keep the conscience of the women enslaved to the friars."

CASA Real during its glory days

Elevating the issue to nationwide status, the most important development was when Dr. José Rizal wrote a congratulatory letter ("Sa Mga Kababayan Dalaga sa Malolos") to the women. Following their heroic lead, Rizal was inspired by their example and described in his celebrated letter to them the role that Filipino women should play in the national struggle for reform.

Harassment

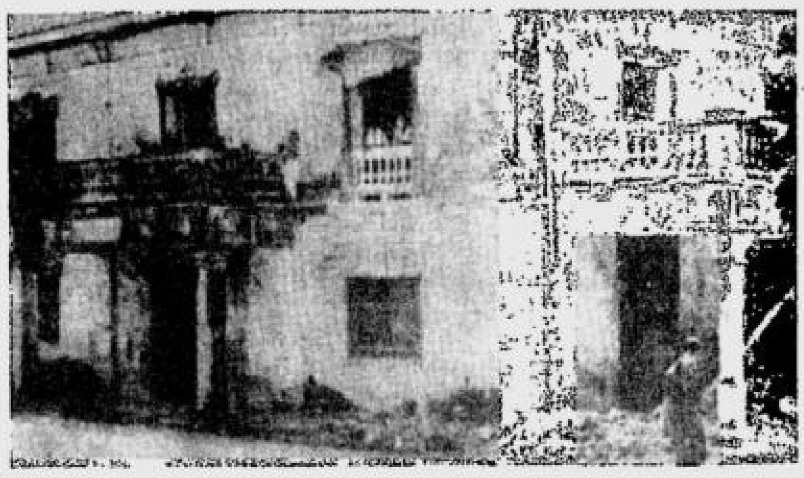
Eventually the school was closed but harassment by the friar escalated. The women gained more strength from the constant attacks. Nia Tiongson and her sisters debated with the friar, Agustín Fernández, telling him that they stopped going to daily Mass thinking that it was better to pray and do good works on their own. They refused to visit the friars in the *convento* because it was gossiped that any woman—maiden, married, or widowed—was looking to lose her honor during such visits.

The seemingly innocent letter to the Governor-General that caused so much controversy follows:

"We, the undersigned young women and others, do hereby present and petition with due respect of Your Excellency the following:

"Desirous of knowing the rich Spanish language, stimulated and gratified for your generous sprit in spreading in the country the knowledge of the Castilian language and unable to learn it in the schools in Manila—some because of the passing circumstances in which they find themselves and others because their domestic duties prevent them from studying during the day, we humbly request Your Excellency that we be granted a night school in the home of an old relative of ours where we shall attend classes accompanied by our mothers to receive lessons in Spanish grammar under a professor who will be paid by us…

CASA REAL TODAY. It houses the Women of Malolos Museum.



THE MALOLOS relic before it was toppled in the 1960s

"It is a favor that we are sure we shall obtain from your well-known generosity. May God keep your precious life many years."

"Signed: Alberta Uitangcoy, Merced Tiongson, Feliciana Tiongson, Maria Tantoco, Basilia Tantoco, Emilia Tiongson, Agapita Tiongson, Paz Tiongson, Lenocia Reyes, Aurea Tanchangco, Eugenio Tanchangco, and Cecilia, Aleja, Filomena, Anastacia, Rufina and Juana (without surnames)."

Women of substance

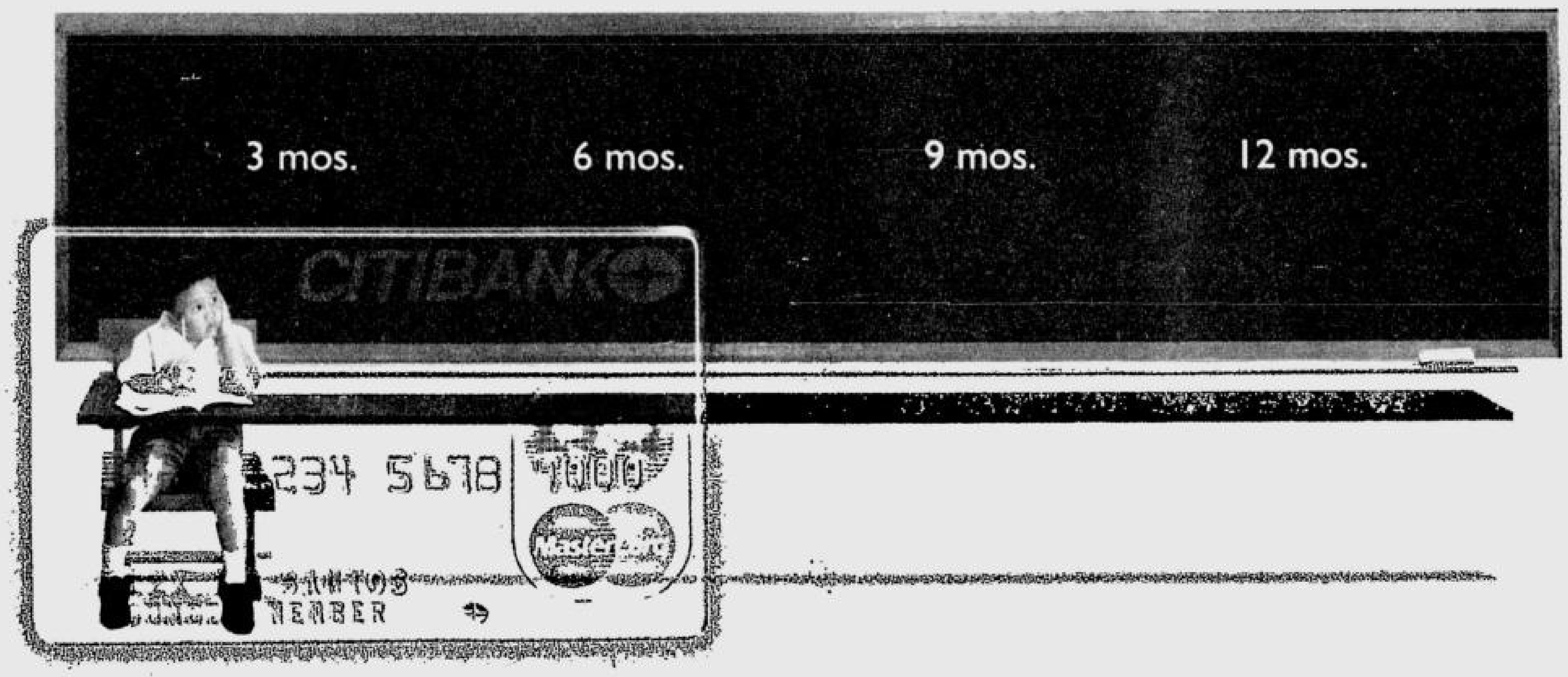
These were women of substance: they ultimately learned their Spanish, participated in the Malolos Revolution as couriers, nursing the wounded Katipuneros, and providing food and shelter.

They are "the 21 women of Malolos who preferred books to rosaries," says Dr. Tiongson. Thanks to them, Filipinas today have complete access to education and all professions including the Presidency of the Republic.

The story continues. The present chapter of the Women of Malolos story is being shaped by Dr. Estefania Aldaba Lim whose wondering why the letter and not the women of Malolos is celebrated today led to her founding of the Women of Malolos Foundation.

Realizing that the heroism of these women merited the historic letter of Rizal, Dr. Aldaba Lim organized the Women of Malolos Foundation that would keep the memory of the 21 women alive. More than the memory, it was the principles and commitment of the women that must be known to the present and future generations.

TODAY'S/ p.D2



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LIFESTYLE

Arts Design

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Design à la carte

French-trained JoseF Crisanto joins Movement 8 and Al Caronan in pushing Philippine design frontiers

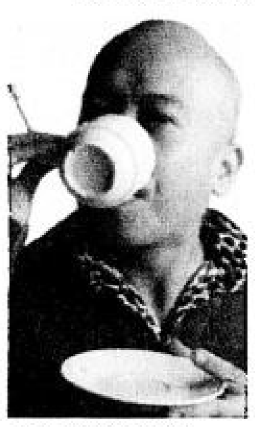
COOKED in Marseille may seem an odd name for a design entity, but Filipino designer JoseF Crisanto, who founded this young and funky south of France-based association, claims cooking is a lot like designing.

His recipe? Choose the finest, freshest ideas. Chop, mince and grind to extract the essential substances. Next, mix and stir with clever care. To season, add a dash of humor and a pinch of style. Finally, serve with flair.

But first things first. What brings Crisanto back home is his stint as the merchandise consultant for the Manila Fame International happening on April 22-25 in three venues (World Trade Center-Metro Manila, Philippine International Convention Center and the Philippine Trade Training Center). For those not in the know, Manila Fame is the biannual trade show exclusive to trade buyers and buying agents organized by Citem, the Department of Trade and Industry's export promotions agency.

Crisanto finished design at the Ecole Superieure des Beaux-

DESIGN/ p.E5



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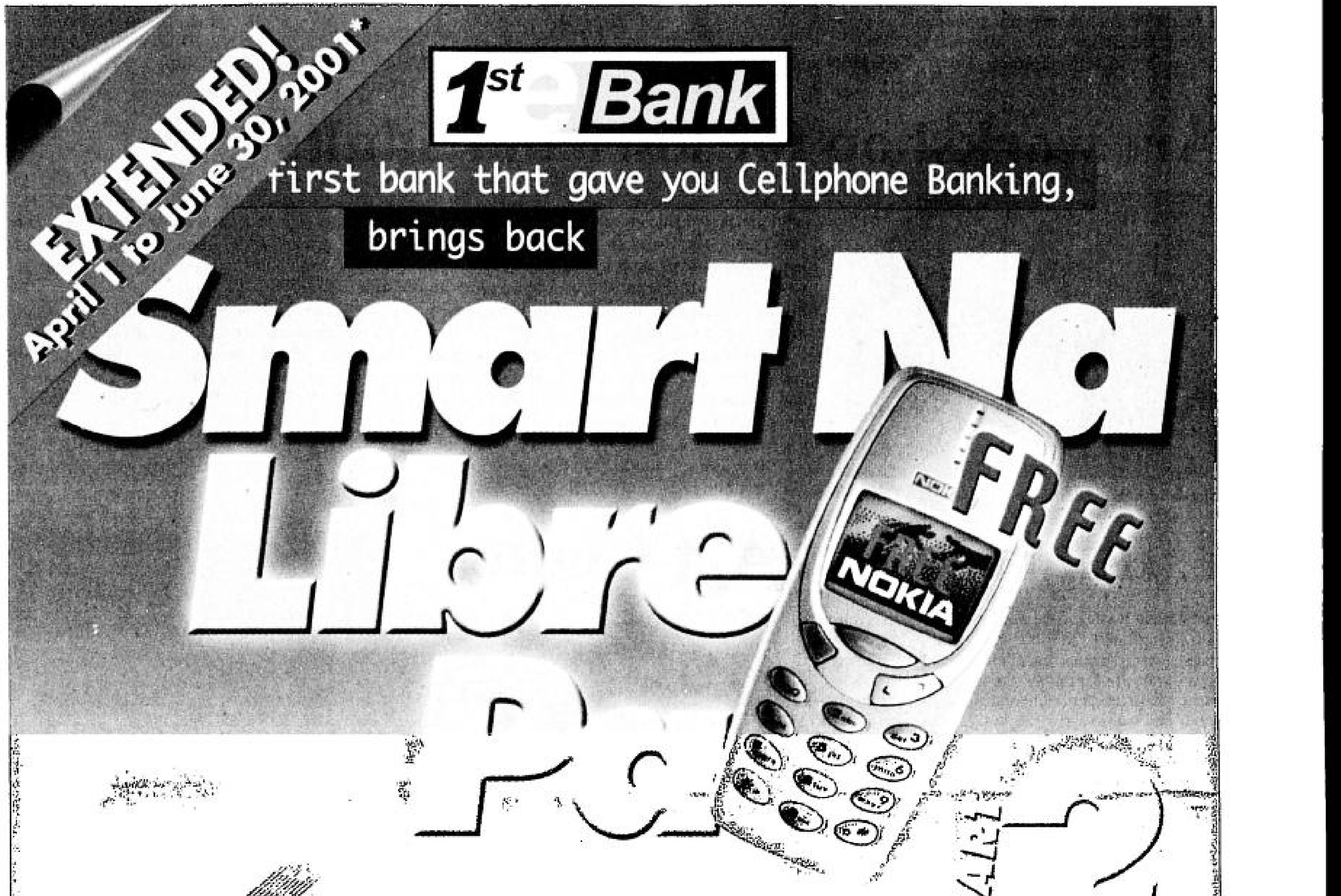
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Nestor Torre, visual artist

THE MAN and his art

PHOTO BY MANDY NAVASERO

NESTOR U. Torre has made a name for himself in various fields—as a prizewinning playwright, TV-film reviewer, director of original Filipino musicals like "Katy" and "Magsimula Ka," TV host and screenwriting teacher.

Unknown to many, however, all these years Torre has devoted many hours of his time to yet another major involvement—the visual arts.

He has been sketching and painting since childhood. But it took a long stay in 1986 in the People's Republic of China for Torre's love for painting to come into its own.

This happened when Torre was tapped to act in a Filipino-Chinese movie production that was shot throughout that country. Torre was given an unforgettable five-month immersion in Oriental arts and culture, and found himself painting every day.

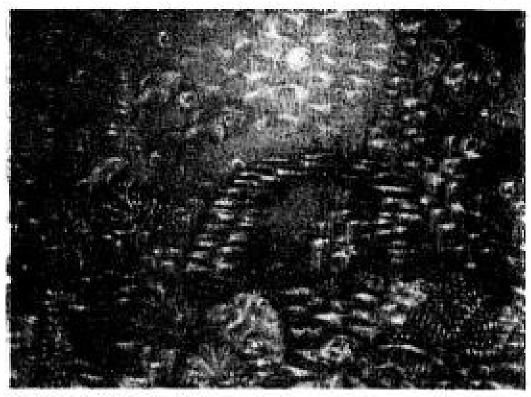
Interestingly, while he used Chinese brush and ink, he painted subjects that were not traditionally Chinese. Even after he got back to the Philippines, he continued to paint and sketch.

Eventually, he discovered where his special interest lay: in experimentation, in using materials in new ways, in "finding" a painting's essence.

This accounts for the diversity of themes, materials and styles in his works, although most of them are in black and white.

At 6 p.m. on April 24, 30 of Torre's works from 1986 to 2000 will be showcased in his first art exhibit. The exhibit, "The Image Within," is being mounted by Torre's friends at well-known artist Araceli Limcaco Dans' new studio at the Dans residence at 48 corner Scout Fernandez and Scout Tuason Streets, QC (one night only).

Art workshop for kids and adults


SEASCAPE by Victor Bella

INDUSTRIAL artist and painter Victor Bella, who graduated fine arts at Maastricht Academy of Visual Arts, Holland, opens his eighth summer painting workshop for kids and adults. The workshop will feature the most complete and highly updated and detailed information on drawing and painting.

Students will learn how to draw and paint subjects such as landscapes, portraits, flowers and cloudscapes. Drawing mediums include pencil, pen and ink soft pastel and oil pastel. Painting mediums include acrylic, oil and watercolor.

The painting workshop will also include glass-painting techniques. Discover new, organized and systematic approaches such as freehand and high-tech drawing and painting. Learn all the artistic styles such as realism, impressionism, fauvism, cubism, surrealism and abstract.

Students will receive complete, updated and world-standard information with hands-on participation. Those interested may check out work samples at www.geocities. com/victor_ bella.

Call 890-3778 or (0917) 368-3212, 10 a.m.-12 nn and 1-5 p.m. Mondays to Fridays. Visitations are by appointment. Lessons will begin on April 25 at 30 Polaris St., Bel-Air, Makati City.

Lamarroza at Art Center

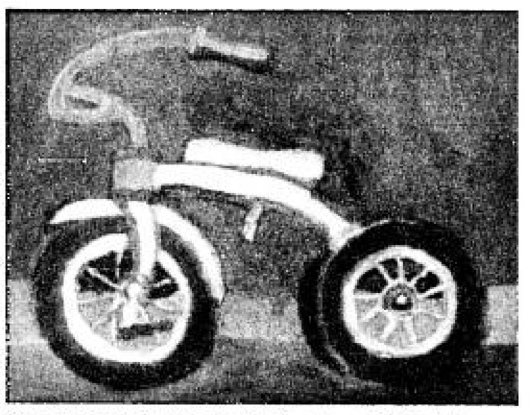
PRUDENCIO "Amor" Lamarroza has returned to familiar grounds in his latest landscapes, seascapes, cloudscapes and genre scenes. Dubbed "Landscape, in Memory," the artist's new show is naturalist in temperament and shows variations in depth and saturation, a masterly precision of detail, mood and atmosphere, and fine rendering of chiaroscuro. The exhibit will be at the Art Center, 4/F SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City. A counterpart show of photographs is ongoing at the Metropolitan Gallery, 6/L Shangri-La Plaza. The two shows will run until May 1.

VISUAL ARTS

ITALIAN ARTIST AT THE LUZ GALLERY. Federica Rubattu presents an exhibit of metal reliefs inspired by landscape and jewelry shaped by the imagination at the Luz Gallery, Locsin Building, Ayala corner and Makati Avenue, Makati City. The exhibit runs April 25-May 17. Call 815-6906 or 893-4376.

CUNETA AT GALLERY Y. Connie Cuneta presents her first solo exhibit on May 1, 6 p.m., at the Gallery Y, Glorietta 4, Makati. Dubbed "Romancing Life," it features over 25 canvasses in oil and watercolor on subjects ranging from still life, sea and waterscapes.

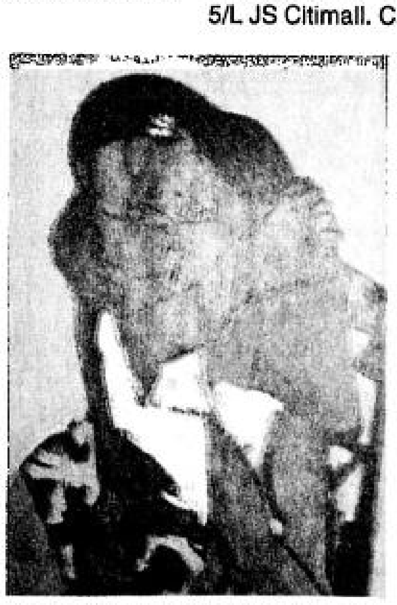
ROB Tanedo presents an exhibit of his latest artworks, dubbed "Emerging Images," at Gallery 5, 5/L JS Citimall. Call 224-0808 local 807.


JULIEN Tan holds his first solo exhibit at the Kafecionado Coffee Bar in Legaspi Village, Makati City. The exhibit runs until April 30.

VALENCIA, VERANO AND CASTAÑEDA AT GALLERY 139. Magoo Valencia, Frank Verano, Pete Castañeda present their latest exhibit, "Bringing the Great Outdoors In," at Gallery 139, 4/L SM Megamall. The exhibit runs until May 8.

INTERNATIONAL ARTIST AT THE PEN. Well-known artist Dr. Teruko Haga of Tokyo, Japan will open her 48th one-woman exhibit of "Oriental Paintings" at the Peninsula Manila on April 25, 6:30 p.m.

'CHASING THE LIGHT' AT AYALA MUSEUM. Artists and art students of the Ayala Museum will feature still life and landscape paintings in oil on April 24-May 4. Participating artists are Kerima Adam, Mardy Aguilar, Elsa Bouffard, Aurora Caparas, Clay Dalid, Angela Faustino, Erlinda Gamboa, Lorenzo Lesca, Teresita Mapua, Micaela Lourdes Reyes and Catherine Molly Yap. Call 812-1191 to -97 local 106.


"MOTHER and Child," by Angelito Antonio, is part of the exhibit titled "In Her Arms" at Silahis Arts and Artifacts, 3/F Glorietta 4, Makati. Participating artists are Benjie Cabrera, Ronald Cortez, Jes Garica and Mark Shellshear. Call 728-4961 or 527-2113.

GLASSWORKS. The Glass Art Society of the Philippines, an organization of artists involved in the production of artworks using glass as the primary material, is participating in the United States Glass Art Society's 31st annual conference, June 14-17, in Corning, New York. The four-day conference is expected to attract artists, collectors, critics, educators, students and glass manufacturers from all over the world. Call (0917) 815-5488.

BAGUIO ART WORKSHOP. "Summer Art Workshop sa Tam-awan" will be held at the Tam-awan Village in Baguio City today until April 26 and on April 30-May 3. Workshops will be conducted by the Tam-awan Village Artists. Call (074) 446-2949.

EXHIBIT FOR KIDS. The recently concluded five-day Snack 2001 (Summer Nature and Arts Camp for Kids) will hold an exhibit on May 12-15 at Lanelle Abueva's Pottery Exchange, Garden Level, Bonaventure Building, Ortigas. Call 721-0801, 724-1762 or 726-7164.

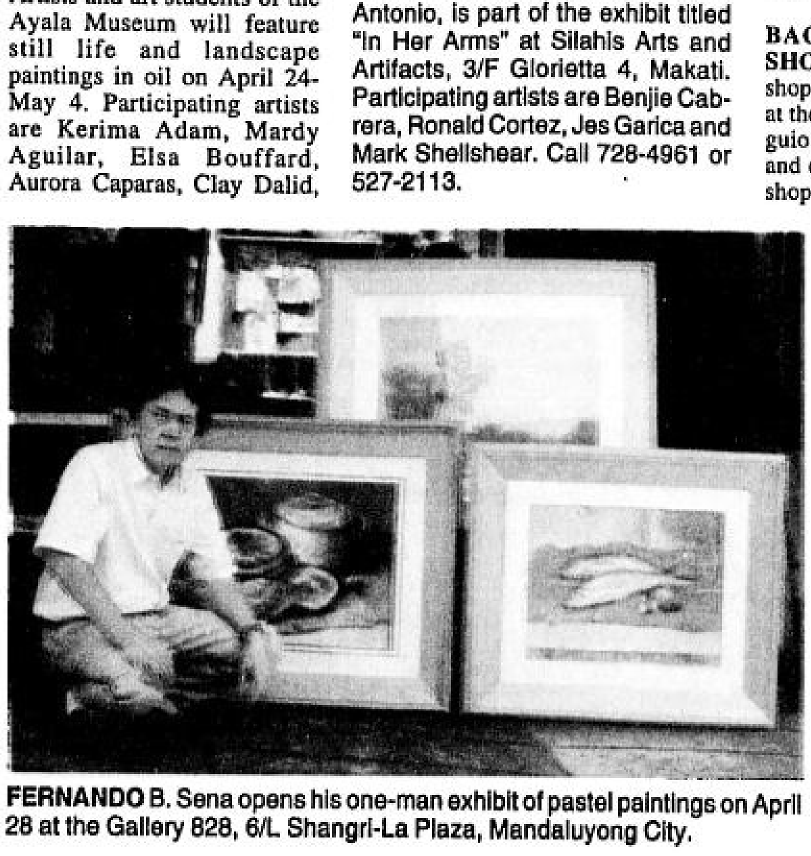
PLAYGROUND ART. Ayala Museum has introduced a new program for toddlers in a playgroup setup. Dubbed "Play Art for Toddlers," the program, which will run until May 17, aims to expose children to art at a very young age by promoting exploration and experimentation of tactile, visual and auditory sensations. Activities like storytelling, finger painting and string art will also be conducted. The sessions will be facilitated by Veronica Ocampo. Call 812-1191 to -97 local 130.

ART WORKSHOP. Artist-instructor Pol Mesina Jr. will conduct an art workshop at the God's Little Angels Development Center Inc., 0265 Sunset Drive, Brookside Hills Subdivision, Cainta, Rizal until June 9. Call 647-4504, 371-0632 or 932-0161.

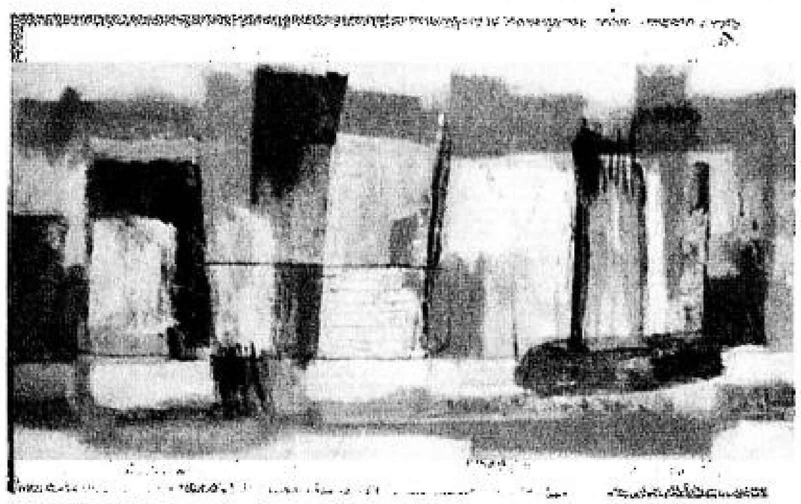
ART MAGAZINE'S WORKSHOP. Arts and Artists, the first magazine showcasing Philippine arts to the world, is offering an art workshop dubbed "Power Arts 101," May 7-19, at the Pearl Plaza in Tambo, Parañaque City. Call 831-9631, 833-8036 or e-mail arts_artistrp@hotmail.com.

WORKSHOP AT THE CCP. The Cultural Center of the Philippines and Tanghalang Pilipino are holding their annual workshop series dubbed "Summer at the CCP: 2001 Theater Arts Workshop" until May 27. The intensive six-week courses are designed for both beginners and experienced artists. Call 832-3657, 831-3415 or 832-1125 local 1607.

LECTURE. Ayala Museum will hold a series of lectures at the Amorsolo Room of the Ayala Museum to complement its special exhibit dubbed "Art of the Cross: A Philippine Tradition." Lectures will be held every Saturday from April 28-May 12, 3-5 p.m. Call 812-1191 to -97 local 106.


FERNANDO B. Sena opens his one-man exhibit of pastel paintings on April 28 at the Gallery 828, 6/L Shangri-La Plaza, Mandaluyong City.

JULIUS Limpe is holding his eighth one-man show, "Fish Kingdom," at the West Gallery, 3/L Glorietta 4, Ayala Center, Makati, until May 1. After tackling different subjects from nature, Limpe now tries to animate fish in different moods and actions. Call 752-7028/7029.


"THOUGHTS from the Gutter" by Jojo Lofranco

Pure painting as social commentary

By Constantino C. Tejero

TWO boys are staring in befuddlement at an abstract painting in a gallery.

"What is it?" asks one.

"It's a picture of paint," replies the other.

It's only a cartoon but it says so much about pure painting, abstraction in art, and critical interpretation.

These thoughts occurred to us when we viewed "Thoughts from the Gutter," the second one-man show of nonfigurative artist Jojo Lofranco, ongoing until April 25 at The Drawing Room (extension area) in Metrostar Building at 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City.

These are untitled compositions in acrylic and charcoal on paper, in uniform size of 75 cm x 55 cm. They consist of splotches, smudges and blurs of ochre, maroon, slate, olive-green, white, cream, with dashes of black or orange here and there. At a distance, they just dissolve in a wash like a Pacunayen watercolor.

Despite the jagged shapes, mostly squares and rectangles, the color combinations particularly of slate and green are restful to the eyes. An elongated oval form outlined in charcoal can often be seen floating above or superimposed on the mass of colors.

"In my work, the process always stimulates me, for I can communicate with the materials right away," says the artist. "Intuition beyond the obvious, absolute freedom, fascination with accidents and control. It is a way of expressing everything that I carry inside me and leaving the interpretation to the viewer."

Surprisingly, some viewers find in these nonfigurative compositions the outlines of a handbag, a mask, ice cream in a cone, a pile of garbage, a doorway, a shantytown with laundry on a clothesline. Based on the exhibit's title, the last interpretation seems closer to the artist's vision.

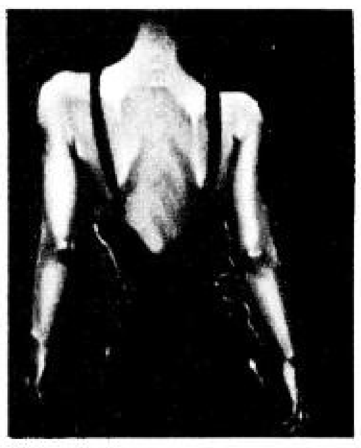
But all interpretations are valid. In fact, each interpretation adds another layer or dimension to the work.

Lofranco's work verges between social commentary and decorative art. On one hand, it limns the pathetic huddle of shanties and the desperate lives they may contain. On the other, it is "a picture of paint."

The artist may have a harsh vision of the *barong-barong*, done with sharp lines and congested shapes, yet each composition is rendered in a color tone that is warm and soft, approximating the quality of pastel or watercolor.

Indeed, art has a way of cushioning the unpleasant impact of reality.

Women artists at Enterprise Center


"WHAT Lies Beneath White Lies of White Laces," oil on canvas, by Michelle Empleo

ALTHOUGH art is dominated by the ubiquitous male persona, three female artists have taken it upon themselves to define their own direction. Mailah Baldemor, Michelle Empleo, Margaret Rose Rodriguez and Mylene Santos showcase their works in an exhibit, titled "M," until May 3 at the Upper Lobby, Tower 2, Enterprise Center, 6766 Ayala corner Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

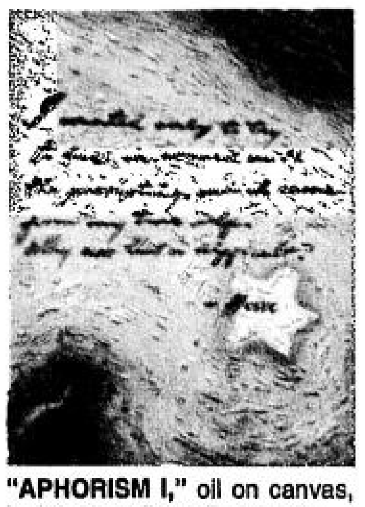
All three are recent graduates of the University of Sto. Tomas College of Fine Arts and Design.

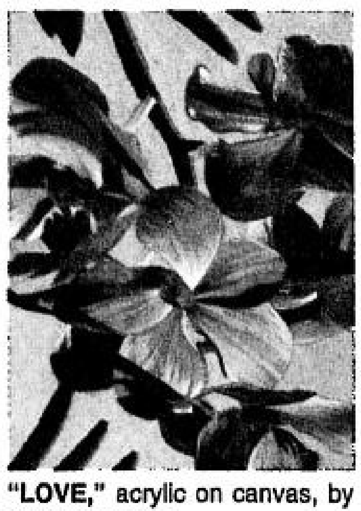
Baldemor, daughter of artist Manuel Baldemor, presents works that show her darling devotion to her father. It is commonly known that she endears herself to him through constant companionship that does not lack in mentorly respect and mutual high regard. Currently pursuing her master's degree in fine arts at the University of the Philippines, she is also a member of the faculty of the UST College of Fine Arts.

Under the fine tutelage of her mentor, the artist Ronald Ventura, a faculty member of UST, Empleo has blossomed into an artist. Her childlike playfulness is easily seen in the way her works convey a sense of mystery. Empleo employs a veiled reference to a woman's ability to cover herself with cloth that serves as her shield.

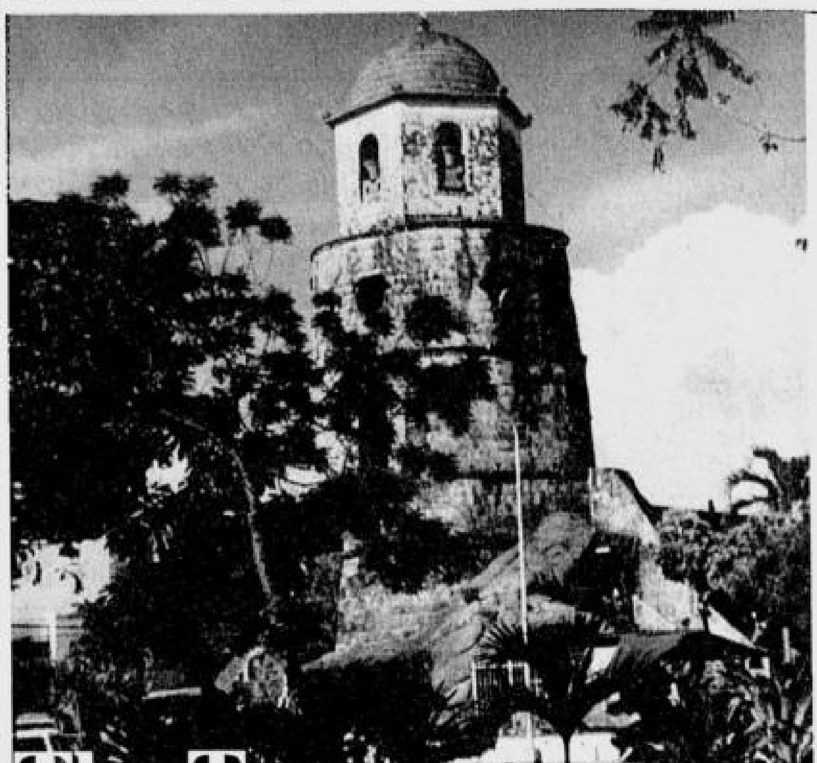
Rodriguez and Santos are both skilled graphic designers in advertising who have decided to express themselves beyond the usual storyboard. Rodriguez, in her works, shows her wanderlust and quest for adventure. Santos shows her flair for floral things, culled from a childhood spent among flowers and greens.

"M" marks the third exhibit staged by The Big & Small Art Co. Call Dr. Joel C. Mendez at 371-8886 to -87 or (0917) 815-5488.


"APHORISM I," oil on canvas, by Margaret Rose Rodriguez

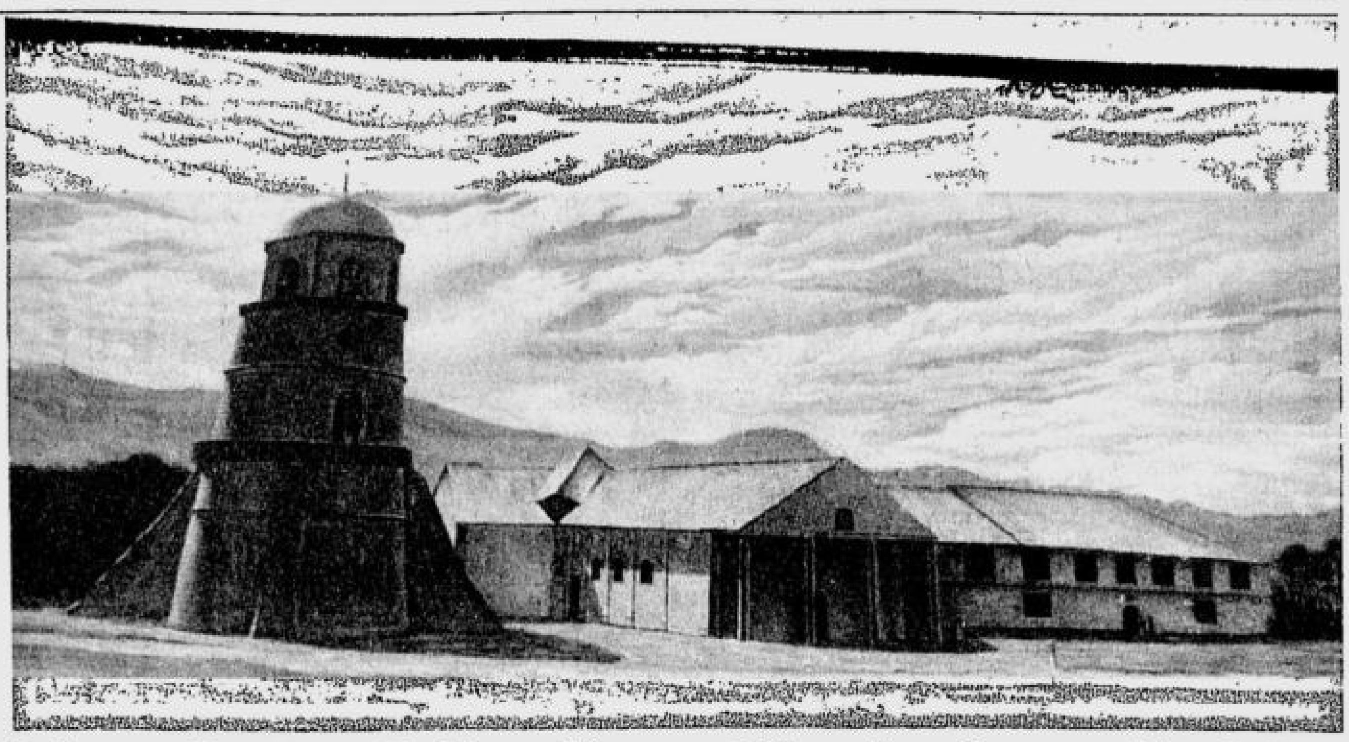

"LOVE," acrylic on canvas, by Mylene Santos

MICHELLE Empleo, Margaret Rose Rodriguez, Mylene Santos



DUMAGUETE'S stone bell tower as it looks today.

COURTESY OF IMAGE BANK



PAINTING of Dumaguete's stone bell tower beside the old Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria and the first convent of the Sisters of St. Paul de Chartres, circa 1900s.

COURTESY OF IMAGE BANK

The Tausug princess who bridged the Muslim-Christian divide

(From page E6)

future.

Love bloomed, on the sly, between her parents, Princess Nora's eldest daughter, Norma "Tita Norma" Mercado Abubakar, reminisced.

To further complicate matters, despite the cultural and religious ramifications of their actions, the two tempted the fates by eloping.

On that appointed day, the 17-year-old Miss Mindanao of 1927 boarded the boat first on what looked like a leisurely trip to Manila. With Mercado whom she fondly called "Hermen" about to join her, Princess Nora had no intentions of going back to her birthplace in Sikobong, Tawi-tawi, or in Jolo where she grew up.

Mercado went to the starboard side of the boat, clambered onto it, using its ropes, avoiding the gangplank watched by the Datu's men. At the time when the Philippines was under American rule, the Sulu Sultanate wielded much power and influence.

Soon the news spread that Princess Nora had eloped with Mercado. The Muslims must have known where the two had sought refuge, for a fleet of *vintas* loomed on the seas of Negros, striking fear in the Negrenses and the Dumagueteños, who must have thought that Moro pirates had returned.

HERMINIGILDO Mercado photographed in 1953

COURTESY OF NORMA MERCADO ABUBAKAR

The cathedral bells from the stone bell tower rang once again, sending the people scampering to safety, including members of the Philippine Constabulary who abandoned their posts. Whispers of "*gikawat man gud ang ilang prinsesa* (their princess was abducted)" was heard everywhere and with that, Princess Nora became a legend in Dumaguete.

No doubt, she was a passionate woman and showed it. If family gossip is to be believed, she, a public school teacher by then, became so overcome with jealousy over a rumored rival for her husband's affections that she resolved this by running after the "wanton" in an elementary school, brandishing a knife.

Youthful

Growing up on the same place where Princess Nora lived in Dumaguete and tagging along during visits between my mother and my Tita Norma, I would observe this youthful "Lola Mora" clad most of the time in her *sambra* and *tadjong* (blouse and long skirt).

Conversations were always in English, but the Princess could shift from English to Cebuano to Tausug with ease, the fiery eyes flashing whenever she talked. Her hair was often tied in a bun, setting off the Arabic features she inherited from her father. She wore large, white pearl jewelry set in gold that glinted against her fair, flawless complexion, a mark of beauty among the Tausugs.

Being the niece of the reigning Brunei Sultan, Princess Nora would talk about the Brunei royals fondly, remembering her travels to Brunei with her family. There were lavish welcomes, the exchange of gifts like gold jewelry and fine *batik* fabrics, "so fine that when rolled could pass through a ring." Even then, Princess Nora talked of the fabled riches of the Brunei Sultan, citing a room in his palace with shelves brimming with gold coins and money bills.

Princess Nora was used to a fabulous world and her relatives wanted her to return to it.

In Tausug culture where *maltabat* (honor) and *sipug* (shame) are at the top of its hierarchy of values and as such, has its fierce side, the Sulu Sultan once more sent *vintas* and the Sultana to get back Princess Nora.

Catching up with the couple in Amlan, Negros Oriental, the Sultana berated Princess Nora for marrying a Christian commoner and choosing to live in what appeared to her a squalid environment. But feminine sympathies must have won out when the Sultana saw the young princess' resolve to stay with her Hermen.

It seemed Princess Nora didn't regret her decision and she blended well with Visayan culture, at the same time shared with anyone who cared, her Tausug cultural heritage until she died at age 71.

She must have made a strong impression on me that each time I see Dumaguete's stone bell tower, it would, before my eyes, dissolve into the *ylang-ylang*'s fragrance and the mist of the Visayan sky touching the calm, blue sea.

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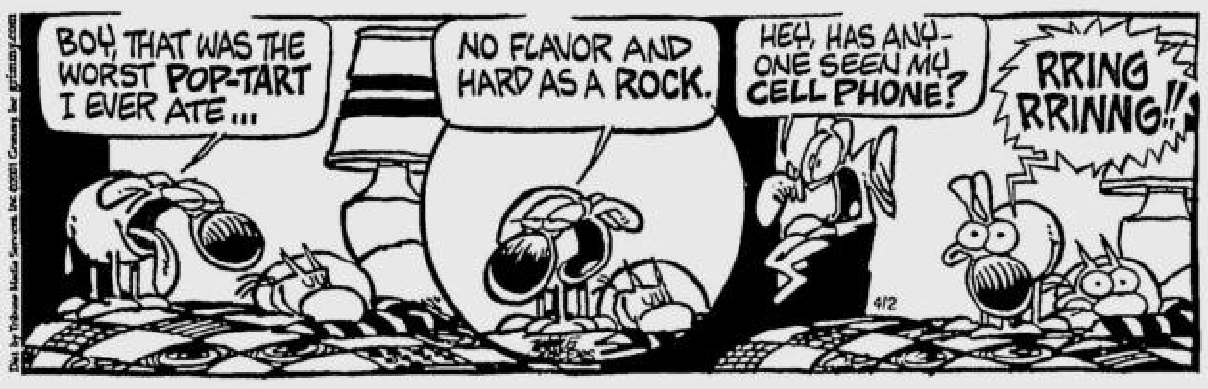
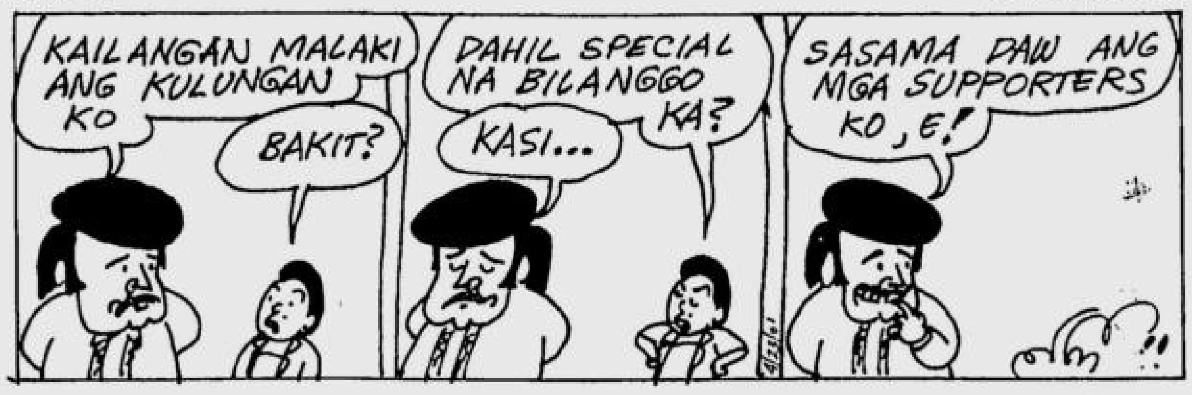
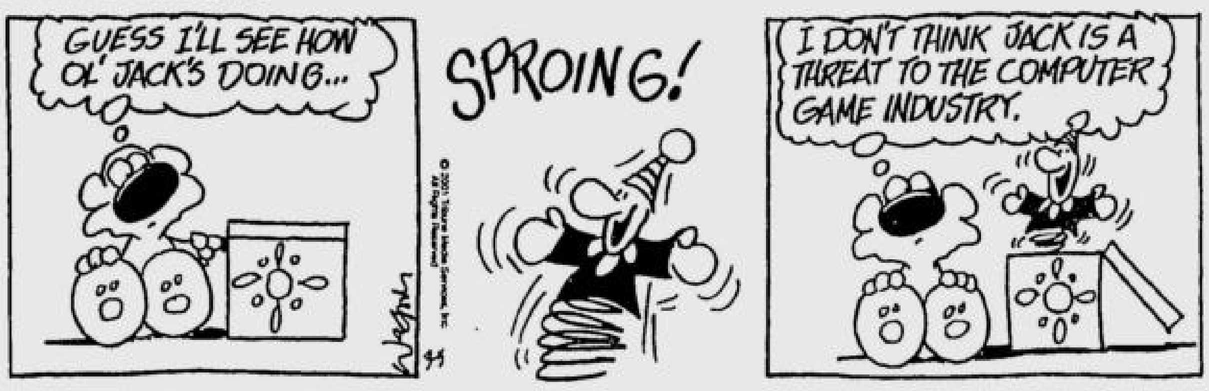
MOTHER GOOSE & GRIMM BY MIKE PETERS


BOY, THAT WAS THE WORST POP-TART I EVER ATE...
NO FLAVOR AND HARD AS A ROCK.
HEY, HAS ANYONE SEEN MY CELL PHONE?
RRING RRINNG!!
4/2

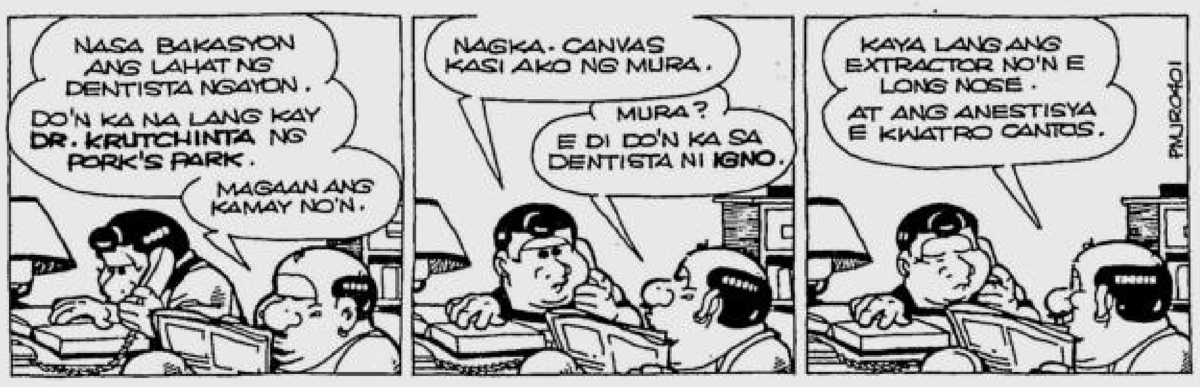
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


KAILANGAN MALAKI ANG KULUNGAN KO
BAKIT?
DAHIL SPECIAL NA BILANGGO KA?
KASI...
SASAMA DAW ANG MGA SUPPORTERS KO, E!
!!

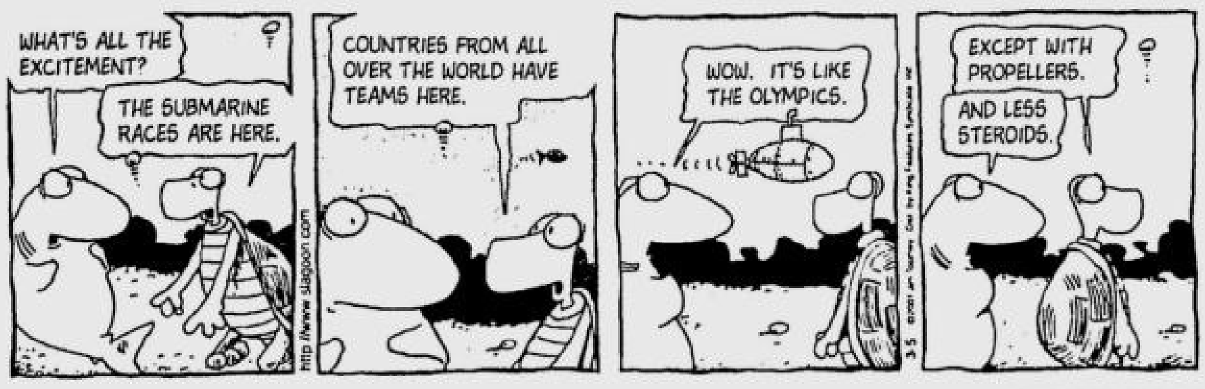
ANIMAL CRACKER BY FRED WAGNER


GUESS I'LL SEE HOW OL' JACK'S DOING...
SPROING!
I DON'T THINK JACK IS A THREAT TO THE COMPUTER GAME INDUSTRY.

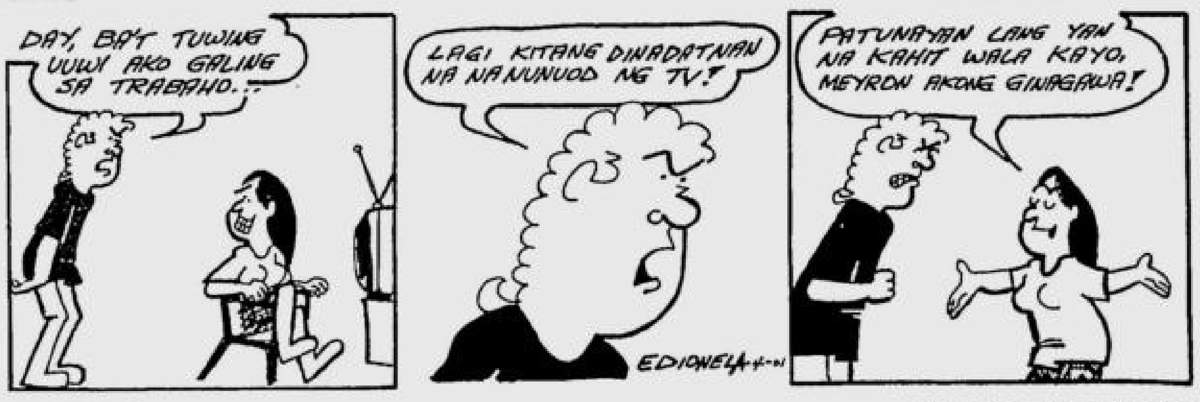
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


NASA BAKASYON ANG LAHAT NG DENTISTA NGAYON.
DO'N KA NA LANG KAY DR. KRUTCHINTA NG PORK'S PARK.
MAGAAN ANG KAMAY NO'N.
NAGKA-CANVAS KASI AKO NG MURA.
MURA?
E DI DO'N KA SA DENTISTA NI IGNO.
KAYA LANG ANG EXTRACTOR NO'N E LONG NOSE.
AT ANG ANESTISYA E KWATRO CANTOS.

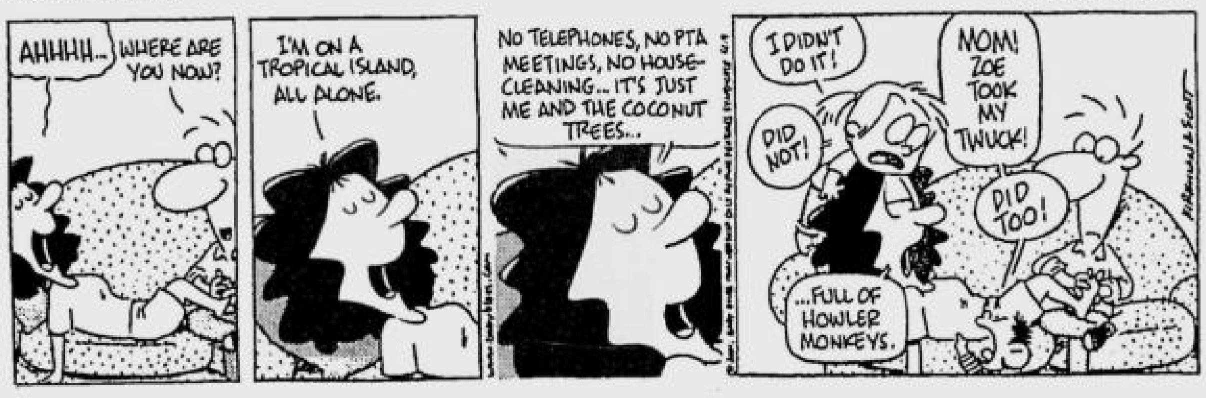
SHERMAN'S LAGOON BY JIM TOOMEY


WHAT'S ALL THE EXCITEMENT?
THE SUBMARINE RACES ARE HERE.
COUNTRIES FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD HAVE TEAMS HERE.
WOW. IT'S LIKE THE OLYMPICS.
EXCEPT WITH PROPELLERS.
AND LESS STEROIDS.
http://www.slagoon.com

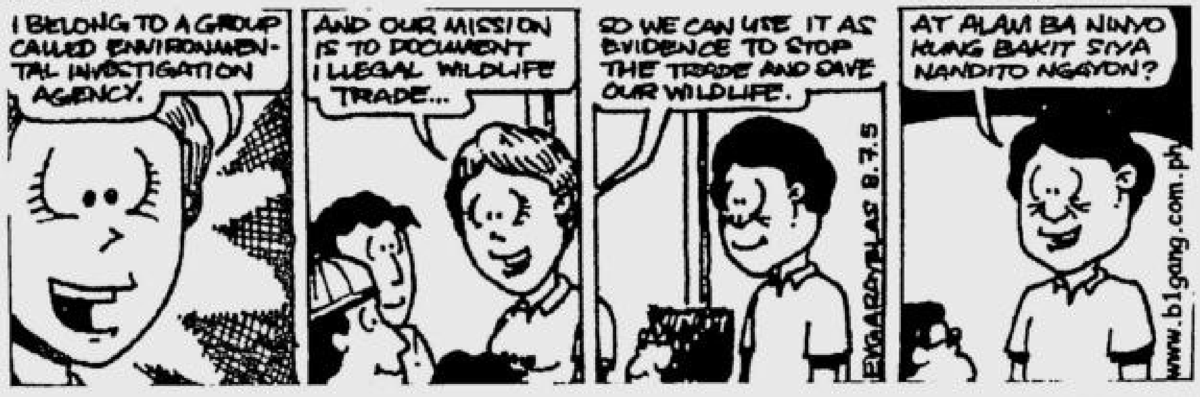
SIMO BY EDGAR DIONELA


DAY, BA'T TUWING UUWI AKO GALING SA TRABAHO...
LAGI KITANG DINADATNAN NA NANUNUOD NG TV!
PATUNAYAN LANG YAN NA KAHIT WALA KAYO, MEYRON AKONG GINAGAWA!
EDIONELA

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


AHHHH...
WHERE ARE YOU NOW?
I'M ON A TROPICAL ISLAND, ALL ALONE.
NO TELEPHONES, NO PTA MEETINGS, NO HOUSE-CLEANING... IT'S JUST ME AND THE COCONUT TREES...
I DIDN'T DO IT!
MOM! ZOE TOOK MY TWUCK!
DID NOT!
DID TOO!
...FULL OF HOWLER MONKEYS.

B1 GANG BY ATS11/ JEA/ FEVG


I BELONG TO A GROUP CALLED ENVIRONMENTAL INVESTIGATION AGENCY.
AND OUR MISSION IS TO DOCUMENT ILLEGAL WILDLIFE TRADE...
SO WE CAN USE IT AS EVIDENCE TO STOP THE TRADE AND SAVE OUR WILDLIFE.
AT ALAM BA NINYO KUNG BAKIT SIYA NANDITO NGAYON?
www.b1gang.com.ph

HOROSCOPE

BY EUGENIA LAST

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: William Shakespeare, Shirley Temple Black, Roy Orbison, Valerie Bertinelli, Blair Brown, Pierluigi Martini, Lee Majors, Judy Davis, Barry Watson, Scott Bairstow

Happy Birthday: Please yourself and forget about trying to do and be everything for everyone. This can be a great year if you are true to your dreams. Get others to help you for a change, so that you too can claim the success that you desire. Prepare yourself for a hectic but rewarding time. Your numbers: 10, 13, 24, 30, 35, 42

ARIES (March 21-April 19): Obstacles may stand in your way. Work quietly behind the scenes where you can accomplish the most. Ignore those individuals who are trying to lead you astray. Stay focused on your goals.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20): Secret information will aid you in making decisions. Your hard work will pay off. Hidden assets will come in handy. You can deal well with government agencies or institutions.

GEMINI (May 21-June 20): Investments will backfire. Don't become involved in joint financial ventures. Disagreements will erupt if you're stubborn when discussing personal matters with your peers or loved ones.

CANCER (June 21-July 22): Children will make unreasonable demands. Get the whole family involved in activities that create a closer bond. Good partnerships can be formed if you're introduced through a mutual friend.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22): Activities with relatives will lead to heated debates. It's best to plan a quiet outing for you and your lover. If you're affectionate, the night could be quite rewarding.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22): Visit with friends you don't get to see very often. Valuable information will be provided if you listen to those with more experience.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 22): Minor health problems will prevail if you don't get sufficient rest and relaxation. Try to take care of legal problems and personal paperwork. You need to get your house in order.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23-Nov. 21): Family members may want you at home when your heart is telling you that you want to spend time with someone you recently met. You'll have to juggle your time carefully.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21): Someone you trust at work may not be as honest as you think. Be open with your boss, and you will overcome any traps that this person is trying to set. Don't give your ideas away.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19): Let everyone see what you've been working on. Stay away from dubious investment ventures being offered by friends. You need to put your cash into your own development.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18): Family responsibilities are escalating. Don't let others saddle you with unwarranted guilt. Be diplomatic but stern in giving of yourself.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20): Be honest and direct in your approach today. Misunderstandings will cause problems with your partner if you haven't been precise in explaining your intentions. This is not the time to keep secrets.

Birthday Baby: You are stubborn, engaging and playful. You have the wherewithal to withstand whatever is necessary to get your own way. You are creative, opportunistic and clever.

DAILY CROSSWORD

TMSPuzzles@aol.com

1	2	3	4	■	5	6	7	8	9	■	10	11	12	13
14				■	15					■	16			
17				18						■	19			
20					■	21				22				
■	■	■	23		24			■	25				■	■
26	27	28					■	29			■	30	31	32
33						■	34			■	35			
36					■	37			■	38				
39				■	40			■	41					
42			■	43			■	44						
■	■	45	46			■	47					■	■	■
48	49					50			■	51		52	53	54
55				■	56				57					
58				■	59					■	60			
61				■	62					■	63			

By Patrick McConville
Manassas Park, VA

3/7/01

ACROSS
1 "Tootsie" co-star
5 Sways violently
10 Nora's dog
14 __ vera
15 Overthrow
16 Medicinal applicator
17 Where kids meet kids?
19 Issue a ticket to
20 Ridicule
21 Of a skull bone
23 Ice house?
25 Noncleric
26 Lorne Greene series
29 Fido's doc
30 Wash. or Jackson in NYC
33 De Havilland of "The Heiress"
34 Helping hand
35 Rugged vehicle
36 Faceted
37 Sock end
38 Pack animal
39 Glad rags
40 Bad: Pref.
41 Personal account
42 U-turn from NNW
43 Form datum
44 Chewing gum's overnight spot?
45 Chamber
47 Gilbert and Teasdale
48 Maelstrom
51 Functional
55 Musical P.S.
56 Pandemonium
58 Utensil
59 Verse accent
60 Check
61 ETs' vehicles
62 Passers in the night?
63 Sov. news agcy.

DOWN
1 Features of Nixon tapes
2 Actor Guinness
3 Newspaper section of old
4 Fetches
5 Bleed
6 Kuralt's successor
7 Incas' "City of the Sun"
8 McDonald's founder
9 Ruined
10 Computer language std.
11 Abrupt reversal
12 See-yal
13 Eve's second
18 Ms. Bergman
22 Writer Conroy
24 Meadow
26 Expenses
27 Hodgepodges
28 Outback instrument
29 Contend
31 Copley and Hatcher
32 Athletic activity
34 Major ISP
35 Dead battery solution
37 Part of VAT
38 Lay it on thick
40 City founded by Andrew Jackson
41 Mal de __
43 Our sun
44 Form a wad
46 Verbal exams
47 Conductor Georg
48 Prohibition grp.
49 Horse's foot
50 Sound of pain
52 Ends of small intestines
53 Clark Kent's Miss Lane
54 Long times
57 Nincompoop

SATURDAY PUZZLE ANSWER

G	A	L	A	■	M	E	R	G	E	■	B	E	T	E
I	S	I	S	■	I	D	I	O	T	■	E	V	E	R
F	I	S	H	I	N	G	B	O	A	T	G	E	A	R
T	A	P	■	R	U	E	S	■	■	R	I	N	S	E
■	■	■	T	O	E	D	■	G	R	U	N	T	E	D
A	M	O	U	N	T	■	A	R	E	A	S	■	■	■
S	E	A	R	■	■	O	C	E	A	N	■	E	V	E
E	A	R	N	S	A	F	T	E	R	T	A	X	E	S
A	L	S	■	P	U	T	O	N	■	■	W	I	S	P
■	■	■	B	A	R	E	R	■	C	H	A	T	T	Y
A	L	S	O	R	A	N	■	C	L	O	Y	■	■	■
M	A	I	L	S	■	■	B	O	A	R	■	W	H	O
B	U	T	T	E	R	F	L	Y	S	N	A	R	E	S
E	R	I	E	■	A	L	O	E	S	■	D	E	A	L
R	A	N	D	■	D	O	W	R	Y	■	O	N	T	O

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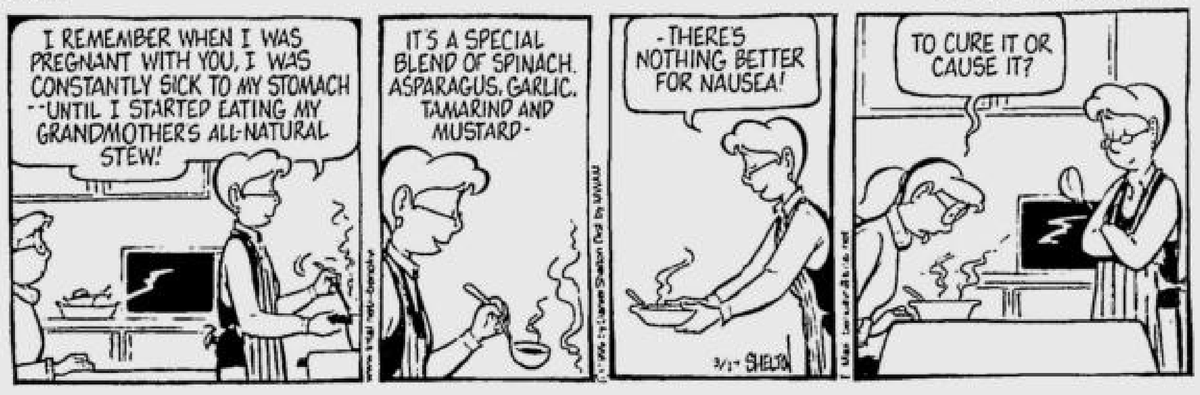
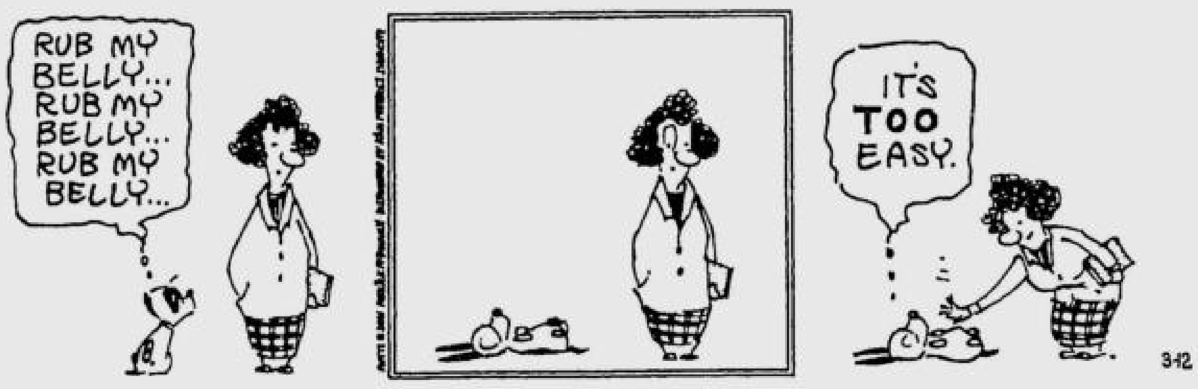
3/7/01

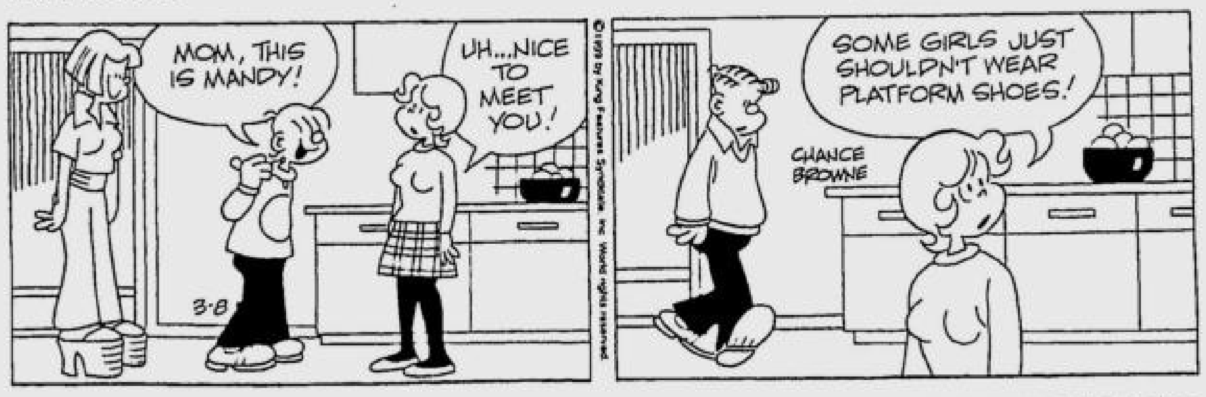
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS PREGNANT WITH YOU, I WAS CONSTANTLY SICK TO MY STOMACH --UNTIL I STARTED EATING MY GRANDMOTHER'S ALL-NATURAL STEW!
IT'S A SPECIAL BLEND OF SPINACH, ASPARAGUS, GARLIC, TAMARIND AND MUSTARD-
-THERE'S NOTHING BETTER FOR NAUSEA!
TO CURE IT OR CAUSE IT?
SHELTON

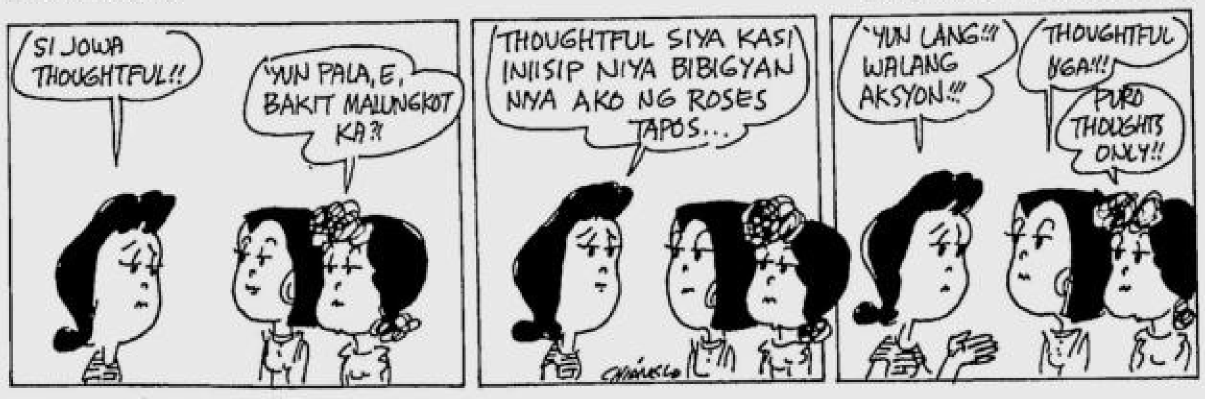
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


RUB MY BELLY... RUB MY BELLY... RUB MY BELLY...
IT'S TOO EASY.
3-12

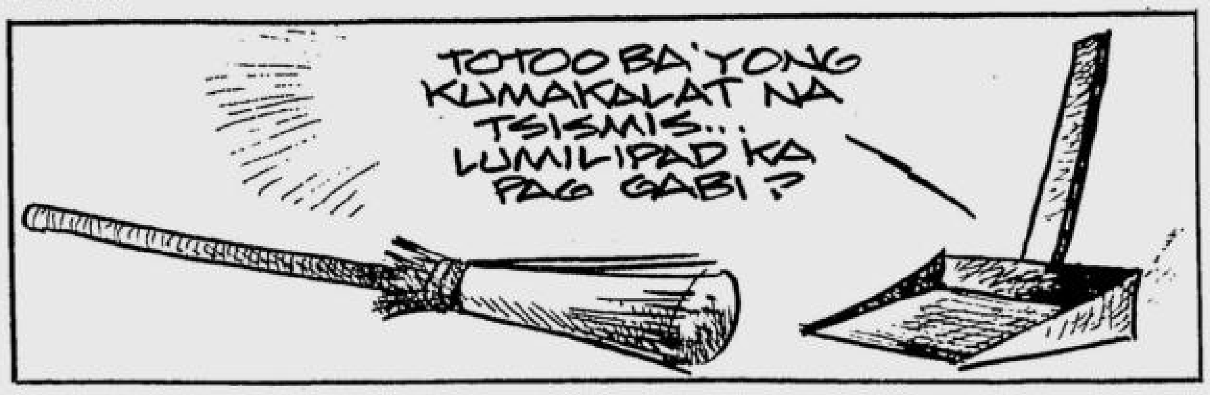
HI AND LOIS BY BRIAN & GREG WALKER


MOM, THIS IS MANDY!
UH...NICE TO MEET YOU!
SOME GIRLS JUST SHOULDN'T WEAR PLATFORM SHOES!
CHANCE BROWNE
3-8

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO

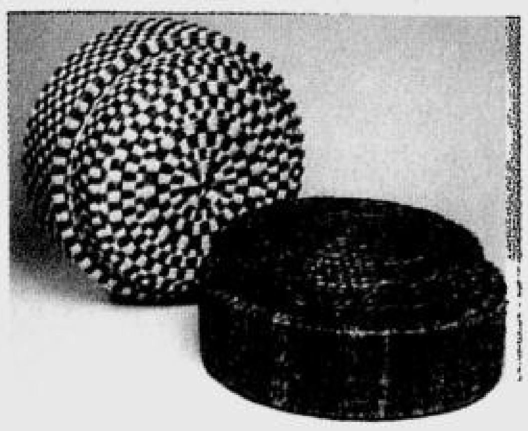

SI JOWA THOUGHTFUL!!
'YUN PALA, E, BAKIT MALUNGKOT KA?!
THOUGHTFUL SIYA KASI INIISIP NIYA BIBIGYAN NIYA AKO NG ROSES TAPOS...
'YUN LANG!!! WALANG AKSYON!!!
THOUGHTFUL NGA!!!
PURO THOUGHTS ONLY!!
CHIONGLO

TULDOK BY PAPU & TATUM MILAMBILING


TOTOO BA 'YONG KUMAKALAT NA TSISMIS... LUMILIPAD KA PAG GABI?

RAFFIA modular pillows and cushions by Catalina Embroideries

METAL and *arurog* chair by Weaverscraft Inc.



ROUND modular seat cushion made of banana raffia, from Weaverscraft Inc.

Design à la carte

(From page E1)

Arts de Marseille in France in 1998. He formed Cooked in Marseille with his mates during their fifth and final year at school, and after winning two nationwide com0petitions launched by the French Ministry of Culture and Radio France.

"We were simmering with ideas and we couldn't wait to deliver our design statements, so we officially presented our project to complement our individual design objects for our fifth year passage *au diplome*," shares Crisanto. The trio eventually passed with flying colors, with Crisanto garnering the presiding jury's highest honors for his wind product called "BlowJoe."

He relates, "After school, my urge to return to the country and work with local manufacturers on the prototypes of my designs consumed me. So last year, I deferred my involvement with Cooked, beefed up my portfolio, flew home and exposed my goods." He looked up Citem and touched base with deputy executive director Arturo Cruz Dimaano.

He is currently working with around 18 export companies, and he has been busy concocting new prototypes for them in time for the April show. His takes on domestic objects border on the fun and easy—laid-back luxury. When asked what product personifies his concepts, he quickly says, "Red, handsewn python skin *tsinelas*."

The show will be open to the public on the last day. So, if you want to catch Crisanto's unique brand of creativity, drop by Manila Fame (show hours are 11 a.m.-4 p.m., with a P100 entrance fee). Other highlights of the show are special settings by Movement 8 (the design group headed by Budji Layug) and Al Caronan, who is the consultant for the Partner Region Program of Citem. The Movement 8 display is curated by Milo Naval, one of the members of the group.

At the Partner Region special setting featuring Bicol (Region 5), souvenir items focusing on the *bulanding* are for sale. *Bulandings*, or the giant whale sharks, is considered an endangered species. To help promote its preservation, Citem has initiated a program that teaches fisherfolk in Sorsogon other means of livelihood. Island Souvenirs has joined this endeavor, coming up with a line of commemorative items with the *bulanding* as the primary design element.

Another worthy cause being espoused by Citem is recycling. The Kababaihan Iisa ang Layuning Umunlad ang Sambayanan mounts its own mini exhibit to showcase its wide array of merchandise put together from discarded Zest-O packs.

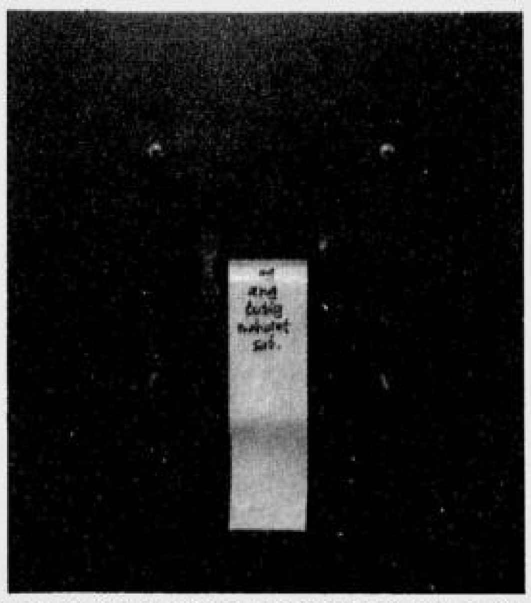
New exhibits at Surrounded by Water

"CONNECTED by Water," an exhibit of recent works by Cebu-based artists Stephanie de la Cruz, Raymond Fernandez, Estela Ocampo-Fernandez, Rainville Gemperoa, Roy Lumagbas, Dennis Montera, Lucilo Sagayno, James Siador, Juan Unson and Javy Villacin at the Artist-run Space of Surrounded by Water Gallery. The show is curated by Bobi Valenzuela.

"Cradles of Deterioration," an exhibit of recent paintings by Allan Alcantara and Wilfredo Offemaria, is on view at The Kitchen.

At The Stockroom is "In the Outer Shell," mixed media works by Ramona de la Cruz and Mervy Pueblo, students of St. Scholastica's College, Manila. Featured works deal with spirits and elementals. The exhibitions will run until May 8.

Surrounded by Water is at 187-A Arle Square, The Pied Piper Place, Edsa, Mandaluyong City. Call 724-2027.



"AT ang Tubig ay Mauubos Din," mixed media, by Roy Lumagbas

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The Tausug princess who bridged the Muslim-Christian divide

By Christine Godinez-Ortega

IN THE VISAYAS, stone watchtowers continue to symbolize the religious and cultural divide between the Visayans and the Moros.

Dumaguete City's own stone watchtower is no exception. Topped by a belfry now, surrounded by foliage and wrapped in the greenest of moss, it still stands strong and mute beside the Cathedral of St. Catherine of Alexandria.

Yet, almost a century ago today, a Tausug princess who knew how to love deeply tried, in her own way, to bridge that gap. She tried to soften the reality of that bell tower's existence.

And it must have been Princess Nora's unconscious way of showing Visayans her rich cultural heritage by popularizing Tausug literature when she submitted for her master's thesis to the Silliman University Graduate School a study of the *kissas* (narrative songs) mislabeled "Sulu Ballads"; by publishing short fiction about her people, one of them appearing in the "Prose and Poetry Series"; and, by sharing the tragic story, "The Abduction of Napsa" in the Philippine Literature textbook for Silliman students in the 1970s.

How Princess Nora Maulana came to live in Dumaguete captivated romantics, especially when the late Philippine ambassador to London, Jose Romero, wrote about Miss Mindanao's "romantic escapade" in the Philippines Free Press.

Fate must have brought together this Moro *dayang-dayang* (princess) and the Christian "commoner," Herminigildo Mercado of Tanjay, Negros Oriental. Mercado was a teacher of Jolo's royal children, one of them, Princess Nora.

Elopement

Datu Maulana thought his daughter Nora should learn not only her three R's but learn as well to manage the family's properties in the

THE TAUSUG/ p.E3

THE 17-YEAR-OLD Princess Nora Maulana as Miss Mindanao of 1927

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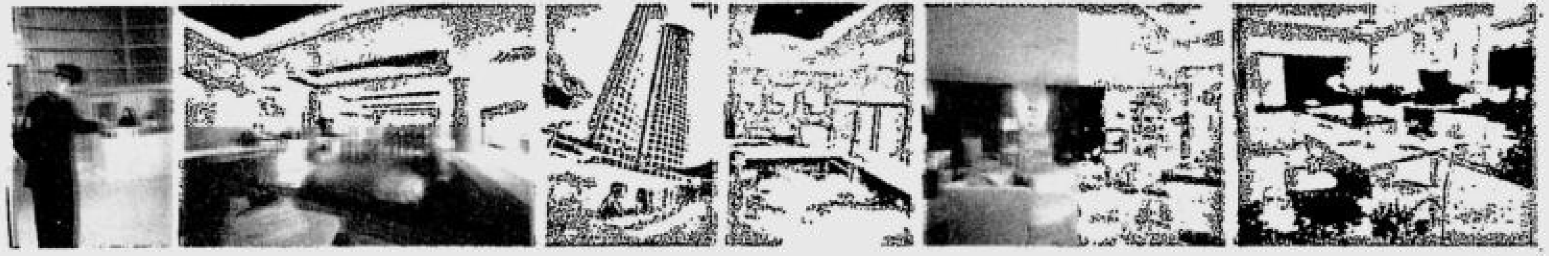

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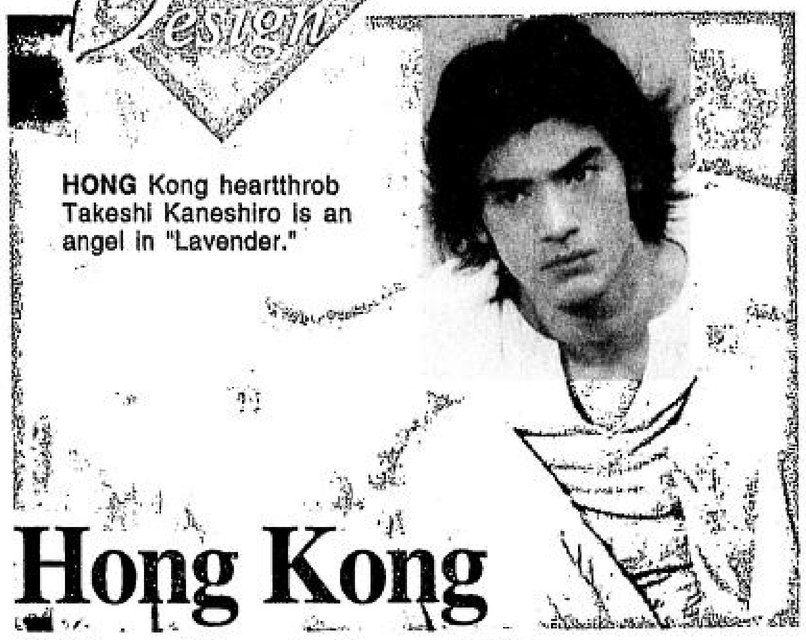

HONG Kong heartthrob Takeshi Kaneshiro is an angel in "Lavender."

Hong Kong filmfest battles 'Hollywoodization'

By Gino Dormiendo

ON THE OCCASION of its 25th anniversary, the Hong Kong International Film Festival showcased a wide variety of films from various parts of the world, with over 200 films from 47 countries, including the Philippines' sole entry, Raymond Red's Palme d'Or-winning short "Anino." "Lagarista," the other Philippine entry, was canceled posthaste due to the failure of the print to arrive, even though it had been long listed in the program catalog.

Being one of the two accredited media participants to the 25th HKIFF—the other was Patrick Flores of the Young Critics' Circle and the Manila Standard—I soaked in a spirited bid to catch the festival offerings for 10 straight days, bracing myself for the hassles of shuttling from one venue to the other and the attendant prospects of film overload from such a punishing, clockwork schedule.

This year's HKIFF edition auspiciously opened with two new films—one from host Hong Kong and the other from France—that mirrored the state of two film capitals geographically worlds apart. Hong Kong's "Peony Pavilion" is loosely based

HONG KONG/ p.F4

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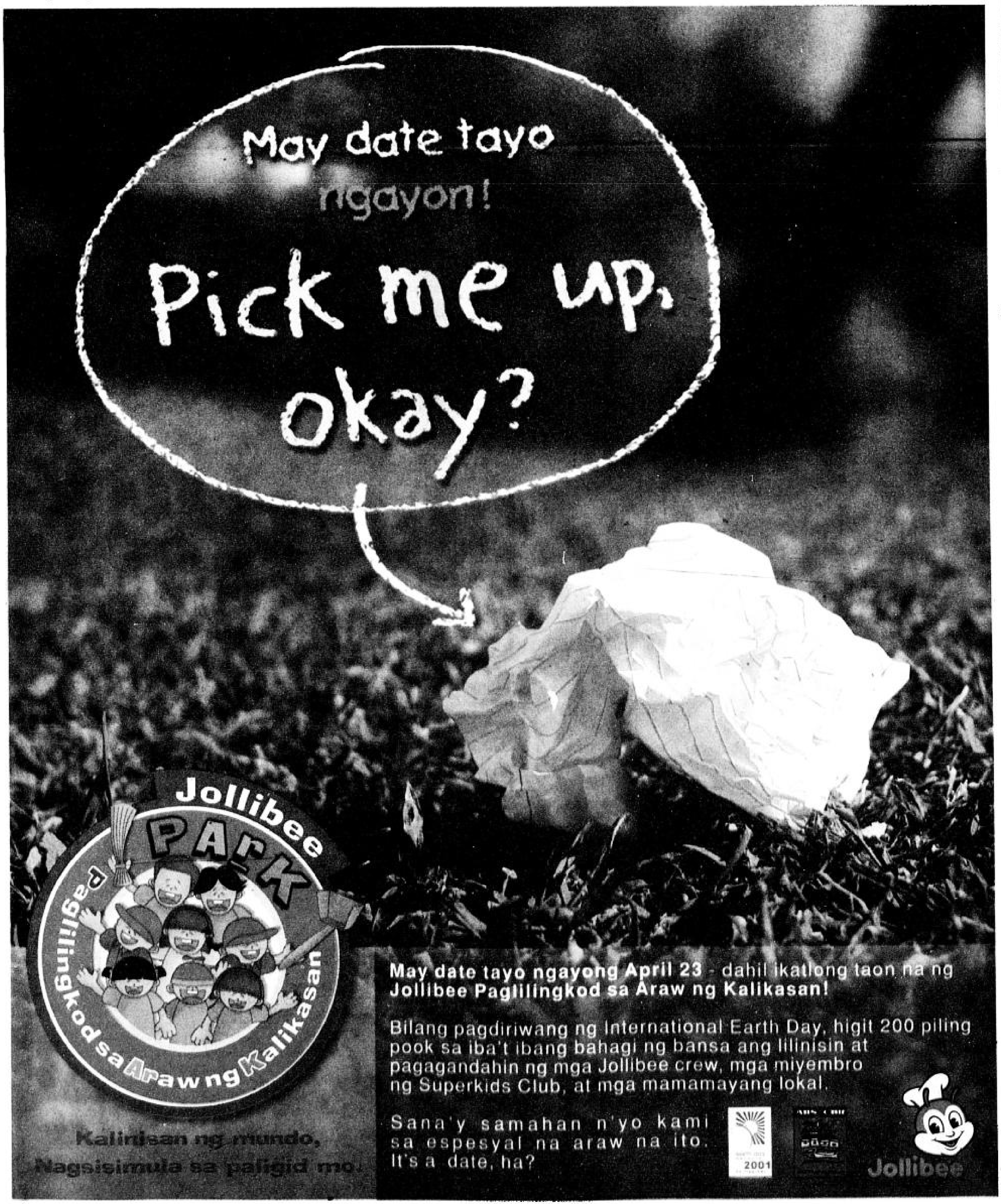
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Remembering a friend named Telly Albert Zulueta

PURELY PERSONAL

Josephine Darang

BOTH Leonor Kilayko and I have fond memories of Tita Telly Albert Zulueta who recently passed away much to the grief of family, friends and those who were blessed to know her.

I remember her calling me for this and that and asking me to just leave the stuff with her grandson Niño who lived nearby. I used to marvel at her energy for traveling from Manila to Tagaytay and back. After all, she was 78.

Most of all, I admired her prolific writing, never stopping for a moment. It was as if God was guiding her, so we would know what He said to this visionary and learn from it.

One particular day that I would always remember was when she asked me to meet her at the Sacred Heart Church on Dao Street and hear Mass. Tita Telly was staying then at the office of her grandson Bacchus, which was near the church.

PIANIST Leonor Kilayko (right) with Telly Albert Zulueta

After Mass, we took a jeep to Pasong Tamo Street where we looked for a small restaurant to have lunch. Knowing that she was used to more classy places, I remember that she was such a lady all throughout the meal, never complaining, and showed how she appreciated it.

If there's one thing I learned from her the most, it was never to stop writing. Tita Telly would have been 81 on July 27 but the Lord took her away.

Leonor Kilayko remembers

We were having lunch at Café Adriatico 1900 when concert pianist Leonor Kilayko told me how much she missed Tita Telly. She said that Tita Telly used to go to all her concerts. Leonor said: "She loved me. She liked my playing." Telly Albert Zulueta was a pianist herself. She was educated in France, according to her former editor Llita Logarta. Leonor said that Tita Telly even borrowed the Rossini piece she liked, so she could play it herself.

When the weekly Women's Journal was published by the Manila Times during the pre-martial law years, Tita Telly was its editor and Llita was a contributing writer. There was a reversal of roles in the late '80s when Llita became Lifestyle editor of the INQUIRER and Telly, a columnist. The two became close and even when Llita left the PDI, Telly would call her and tell how much she enjoyed what Llita wrote in another paper.

Carmelite monastery concert

In spirit, Tita Telly was with us at the concert of Leonor held at the chapel of the Carmelite monastery in Bacolod on April 16. She must have enjoyed Leonor's rendition of Robert Schumann's Scenes from Childhood, Op. 15, as I did.

One could hear the drop of a pin as Leonor played. Once more, what critics abroad wrote about her came to mind. They described her as a "musical phenomenon" with a "virtuoso ecstasy of sound." They say that she strives to reveal the spirit of the works to her listeners without forcing it on them. To paraphrase Robert Schumann: "It is Leonor Kilayko's wish to bring light to the depths of the human heart."

The Mother Butler Guild, which organized the concert, will use the proceeds for the making of liturgical vestments for poor parishes in the diocese of Bacolod.

Remembering the good things

FLOODED as we are with bad news, it is good to dwell on the good things still. Having a snack at El Ideal in Talisay, Negros Occidental is one of them. An open bakeshop and restaurant at the ground floor of an ancestral house, the place serves the best guapple pie I've ever tasted. The place was put up in the 1920s and anybody who is somebody in Negros must have been there.

It is has no aircon, but who cares? The food is good and the pastries are to die for. We'll always remember the time we were there.

Visiting the church of San Nicolas de Tolentino in Talisay is also an experience. The parish still continues the tradition of bringing the saint on Sept. 10, his feast day. But instead of the original image, the replica owned by the family of Leonor is borrowed for the procession.

Then there's the San Diego de Alcala pro-cathedral in Silay where we also saw the museum of the Silay Heritage Foundation, the former Bernardino Jalandoni Ancestral House built in 1908. Ben Arceo showed us around.

It's good to remember the good things that happen to us, so we don't get too hurt at what's happening to the country now.

Apostleship of Prayer

THE APOSTLESHIP of Prayer will hold a national convention on April 27-28 at the PICC Reception Hall. The theme is "Challenges to the Apostleship of Prayer in the Philippine Church Today." Jaime Cardinal Sin and Ricardo Cardinal Vidal will attend. Parishes will be represented.

Sto. Bambino de Aracoeli feast day

MAY 1 is the feast day of the Sto. Bambino de Aracoeli, whose image is venerated in a cathedral in Rome and in its sister church, the Sto. Bambino de Aracoeli Chapel in Filipinas Paradise Complex (FPC), located on Governor Drive, Naic, Cavite.

The occasion will be more significant because it will be the 10th year the feast, with its attendant *karakol* and festivities, will be marked by FPC, a subdivision owned by banker-businessman Dr. Romeo R. Echauz and his wife, Dr. Lourdes Echauz, president of Centro Escolar University.

The occasion begins with an invitational luncheon at La Posada, social and sports center of FPC, followed by a tour of the subdivision so guests may enjoy the fresh, rural ambience of the place. A celebration of Holy Mass takes place at 3 p.m., to be officiated by Bishop Manuel Sobrevinas of the Diocese of Cavite, with the *karakol*, or procession of Sto. Niño images to be accompanied by marching bands.

After 10 years, the *karakol* at FPC has become a much-awaited event by neighboring towns and barangays, who engage in a friendly competition that offers substantial prizes. This year, 14 groups are participating.

The fiesta and *karakol* are the Echauz family's way of thanking the Lord for His blessings, and sharing with friends, colleagues and co-workers such blessings.

April 26 is the feast day of Nueva Ecija's

REMEMBERING/ p.F6

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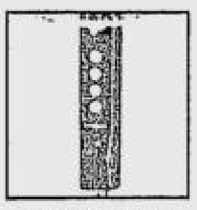

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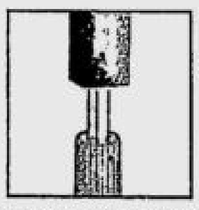

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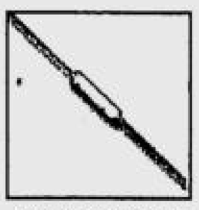

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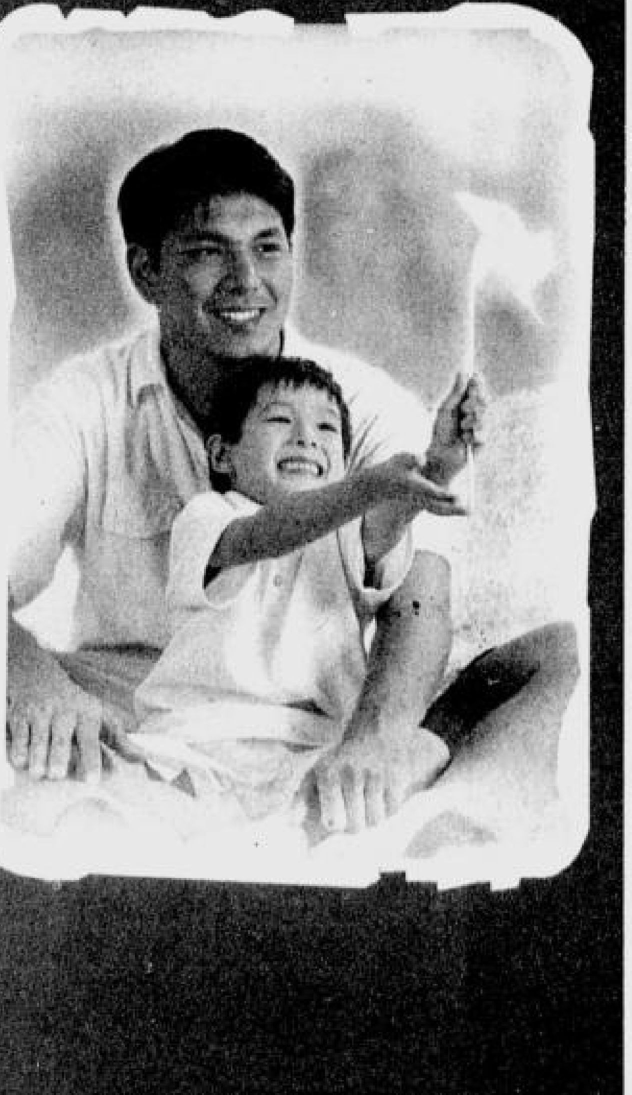

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Art, laundry and Davao

By Pablo A. Tariman

DAVAO CITY—You can't say that music and the arts are a complete stranger to this city. In the '50s, Pavarotti's teacher, Arrigo Pola, sang at the city's Puericulture Center. The country's first piano prodigy Nena del Rosario, was also well-receive in her first recital in this city of flowers.

Of late, new Filipino artists have emerged from this city. In choreography, the contemporary icon is Agnes Locsin. The new breed of pianists include Daphne Jocson, Peter John Porticos and Abelardo Galang.

On the week our visit, tenor Abdul Canto gave a recital in one of the hotels. Broadway musicals enjoy a good run in one of the city's performing arts venues.

On the whole, the arts offerings are still few except when reinforced by visits of Gilopez and Corazon Kabayao, Ingrid Sala Santamaria and Reynaldo Reyes and Raul Sunico, among others.

But arts and music may yet stage a dramatic comeback in this city as Davao City Mayor Benjamin de Guzman has pledged to give all-out support to the city's visual and performing arts practitioners.

"I want to support them because I want to develop arts and culture in Davao City," he told the INQUIRER during the opening of the arts exhibit "Eclectic 6" at the Miscellaneous Gallery. "I also intend to put up a museum where we can exhibit everything related to Davao's past and present, and then house all the talents in one cultural center, servicing the needs of the artists from this city. We want to show the country that we are known not just for fruits, flowers and seafood, but for talents in arts as well."

The participating artists in the latest art opening were Gilbert Miraflor, Manuel Montoya, Alan Obeso, Roger Paconla, Lito Pepito and Robert Vecino.

"This gallery is really heaven-sent because we have so much to offer the art community but very little is done to promote the artists," said painter Paconla, who has had 12 solo exhibits and 40 group exhibitions.

ALEXANDER Tomescu and Cecile Licad (center, seated) with fans Kerima Tariman and Alan Cosio

Miscellaneous Gallery—managed by Amelia Bonifacio, a retired UN employee, and Erlinda Basa, BPI senior manager—actually had a very unlikely beginning. Bonifacio runs a self-service laundry shop and at one time was approached by an artist if he could be given a space to exhibit his works. The exhibition pushed through amid washing machines and it resulted in exposure to artists. "This shows that laundry business and the arts can actually coexist," said Bonifacio.

For the Araw ng Davao celebration, gallery curator Basa decided to transform her family garage into a garden gallery where paintings were exhibited amid flowers and antique farm implements.

Artist Paconla said he gives free leases and workshops because of the emerging crop of visual arts talents in Davao City. Visual artists are also willing to collaborate with performing artists to promote the arts.

Here and there

AS expected, Cecile Licad and the PPO under Ruggero Barbieri were given a standing ovation after their return engagement at the CCP through Rachmaninoff's Second Concerto. Filmmaker Marilou Diaz Abaya was so moved by the concerto's second movement that she was in tears midway.

What many didn't know was that Licad nearly cancelled that performance because the "Miss Saigon" props, including the helicopter, were still on the Main Theater stage on the day of the performance, and the standard shell, which will enhance the orchestral sound, was nowhere to be found. The shell materialized only a few hours before the performance. What shocked Licad was that she was asked to use a microphone to enhance her sound in the absence of that shell and the suggestion came from the head of the technical department. After Licad's request (the shell) was granted, she found out that she couldn't warm up because the piano in her dressing room unceremoniously disappeared two hours before her performance. The CCP did very well in promoting and marketing this concert, but it should not overlook the basic ones—take care of the artist's needs on the day of the performance.

Meanwhile, Abaya was so touched by Licad's performance she offered to give the post-concert reception at the Philippine Plaza for the Licad family.

Also, Licad finally met Romania's violin superstar, Alexander Tomescu, in the dinner hosted by Odette Alcantara. What the CCP crowd didn't hear was Licad's incandescent version of Schumann's "Widmung," which made PDI's Conrad de Quiros see "A Glimpse of Heaven" *(See PDI, 04/09/01).*

* * *

Over in California, pianist Hiyas Hila garnered the highest grade in her latest semester studies at the San Francisco Conservatory. She was instantly a dean's lister. In Cleveland, Filipino tenor Gary del Rosario is now singing one of the roles in Tchaikovsky's "Queen of Spades" and will do the title role of Verdi's "Otello" also this month. The first and the last Filipino tenor to sing that role is Otoniel Gonzaga, who sang it to great acclaim in Prague and Japan.

* * *

California-based Filipino conductor Eugene Fredrick Castillo, who was last heard in a school concert with the PPO, will debut with USA's National Symphony (yes, the same orchestra under Mstislav Rostropovich) at the Kennedy Center. He was one of three selected by a nominating committee for a showcase concert for young emerging conductors in the United States. It's about time Castillo is given a proper PPO debut in its season. His reviews both in the US and Canada confirm the fact that he is headed for the big time. Another Filipino conductor who should be given a slot in the PPO season is Nonoy Diestro, a finalist in the young conductors' competition in France. If we don't take care of our promising conductors, no one will emerge as successor to Red Romero and Oscar Yatco.

* * *

Japan has extended a cultural grant of P20 million to the Philippine High School for the arts at Mt. Makiling in Laguna. The grant will be used to purchase lighting equipment of the school's main theater.

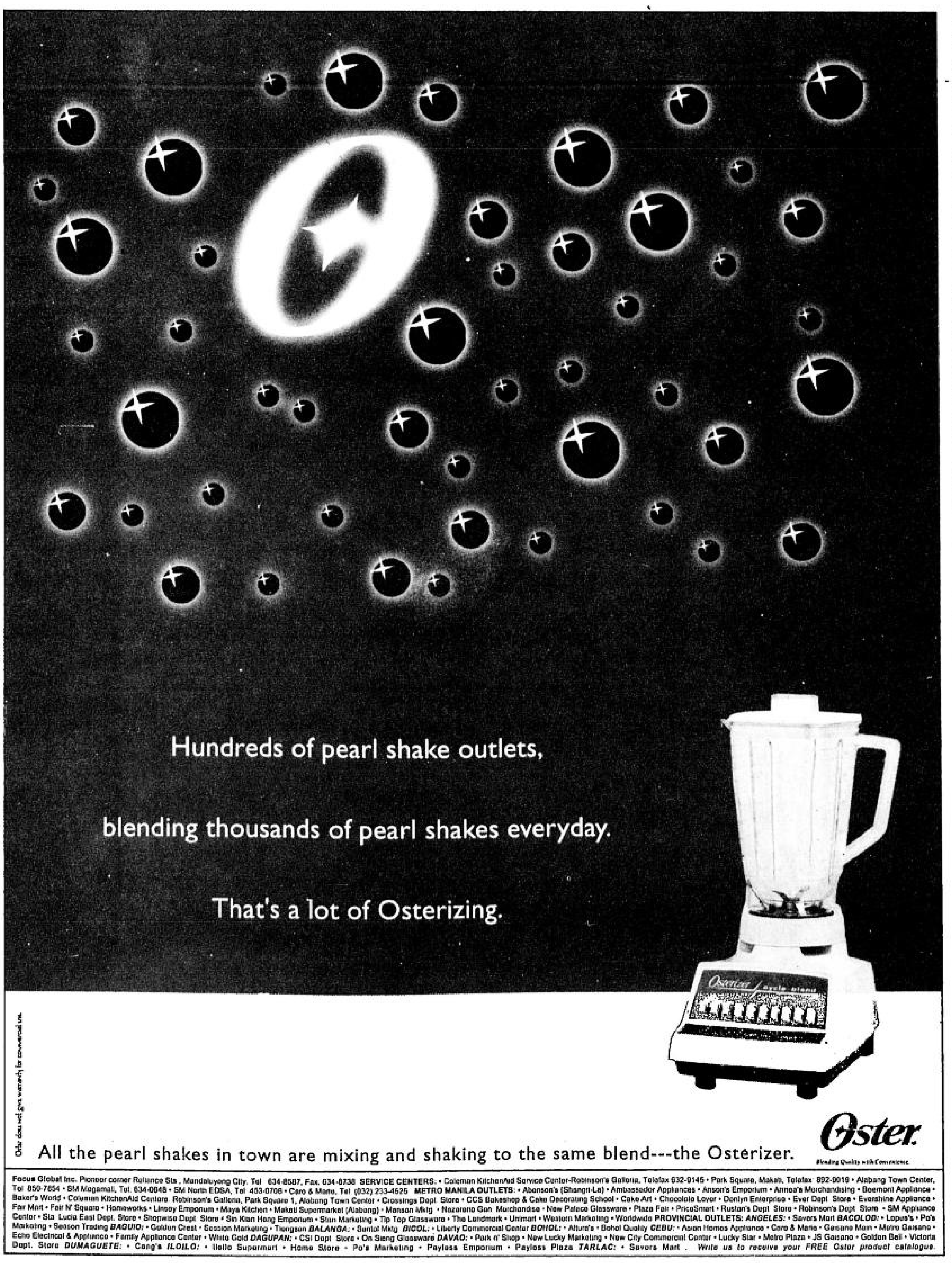
Repertory comedy on two-timing cabbie

RAY Cooney's hilarious comedy, "Run for Your Wife," goes onstage at the Carlos P. Romulo Theater, RCBC Plaza (Ayala Avenue corner Sen. Gil Puyat Avenue. Makati City) from April 26 to May 6.

One of West End's longest-running plays, "Run for Your Wife" tells the story of a London cabbie, John Smith, who leads a very hectic double life. He has two wives. By means of a finely balanced schedule and a lot of fast talking, John manages to keep his two wives unaware until he is involved in a slight accident, and the all-important schedule goes out of the window. To make matters worse, both women have contacted the police about his whereabouts. To save the situation, the frantic cabbie involves his old friend Stanley in an even more complex web of tall stories and improbable explanations.

Directed by Zeneida Amador, this Repertory Philippines production features stage veteran Miguel Faustmann in the role of John Smith, with Rep regulars Ana Abad Santos-Bitong and Liesl Batucan playing the roles of the two frenzied wives, Mary and Barbara. Jeremy Domingo plays the role of Stanley. Other members of the cast include Meynard Peñalosa, Arnel Carrion, Roman Ripoll and Peter Heath. Set design is by Miguel Faustmann while costume design is by Baby Barredo.

Evening shows at 8 every Thursday, Friday and Saturday, with 3:30 p.m. matinees every Saturday and Sunday. Tickets are priced at P250 for the orchestra and P200 for the balcony. Discounts for schools and other groups are available. Also open for special fund-raising performances. Call Repertory Philippines at 633-4821 to 25 or e-mail rep@broline.com. Visit www.repertoryphilippines.com.ph.



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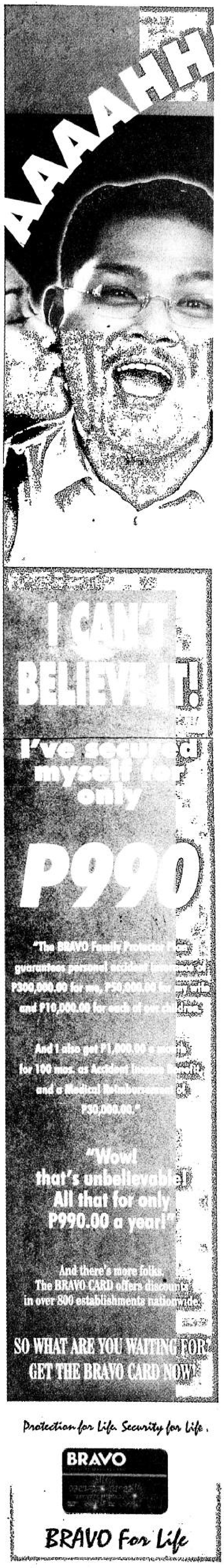

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Hong Kong filmfest battles 'Hollywoodization'

(From page F1)

on Peking's Jingju opera, but the script was reworked following the structure of the Kunju, a more complex kind of Chinese opera that, in the film, depicts the parallel fate and unusual friendship of two women. Written and directed by Yonfan, "Peony Pavilion" comes off as a delightful concoction of passionate drama, spiced with the ancient aesthetics of Kunju singing and a haunting score, made all the more palpable because of the first-rate performances by Joey Wang and Ric Miyazawa, and Henry Chung's exquisite cinematography.

The French "Mortal Transfer," written and directed by Jean-Jacques Beineix, himself the subject of a five-film tribute as this year's "Director in Focus," is a black-and-blue comedy, laced with wicked, surreal twists that plumb the abyss of the imagination, though the image of the skeleton under the closet takes on a rather literal connotation. Beineix is a familiar name to local cineastes, having screened his first seminal film, "Diva," at the First Manila International Film Festival in 1981 and the sensationally erotic "Betty Blue." Outspoken in his anti-Hollywood views, Beineix is renowned, for his peculiarly stylish, postmodern examination of the Jungian psyche, and the dark recesses of the modern soul that drive him to crime.

Another equally renowned director who was the subject of a tribute was Raoul Ruiz, a Chilean now in exile in Paris, whose prodigious output of 90-odd titles encompasses broad-stroked global concerns and wide-ranging sociopolitical inflections. Ruiz is an impressive film figure the world over, having written, directed and produced most of his works, which the Film Comment critic Jonathan Rosenbaum describes as meta-fictional, neither real nor realistic, but just simply conceivable. He has adapted epic novels ("Time Regained," from Proust's "Remembrance of Things Past"), philosophical fables ("Love Torn in Dreams"), black comedies ("Comedy of Innocence") and highly personal films ("Three Crowns of the Sailor").

"THE WEDDING"

"SUNFLOWER"

Hong Kong's homegrown actor Tony Leung Chiu-wai, winner of the Best Actor plum in last year's Cannes, was also accorded a rare tribute consisting of 12 films from a luminous career that spans 19 years and an equally wide-ranging body of works to his credit. As this year's "Actor in Focus" subject, Leung has played in 60 films the disparate roles of gangster, sleuth, womanizer, deaf-mute and homosexual, winning the hearts and minds of audiences around the world.

I caught Leung in seven films—from the grossly commercial fare "My Heart Is That Eternal Rose" through the trailblazing "Chungking Express" and "Happy Together" all the way to his award-winning "In the Mood for Love"—and his cinematic bag of tricks has indeed served him well, a rare screen persona with a seemingly inexhaustible wellspring of resources that shows no signs of dissipating even after two decades.

Playing a deaf-mute in Hou Usiao-hsien's "City of Sadness," his performance speaks volume in his emotive faculties of body language and facial expressions. As a verse-spewing gangster in Tran Anh Hung's "Cyclo," he successfully conveys his character's inner turmoil amid a war-torn, ghost-ridden Vietnam, his loneliness and desperation palpably etched in his performance. And who can forget his lovesick gay Hong Konger exiled to Argentina in "Happy Together"? He brings to the fore the complexity and audacity of a character doomed thrice—by love, distance and social conventions.

"CHUNHYANG"

In the Gala Presentation section, I was awed by the wide diversity of films from various filmmaking sites around the globe, a merry fusion of East and West, coming from affluent and depressed societies, that spell out the giant strides made by cinema at the advent of the 21st century. I was particularly awed by Pavel Loungine's "The Wedding," a tragicomic satire on present-day Russia as seen in the group portrait of a small mining town haplessly lost in the new era of capitalism. The gallery of characters is finely delineated by the director's engaging strokes (what an arsenal of hand-held camera tricks!) and the fine assembly of actors, from the leads down to the smallest walk-in actors, that has lived up to the challenge, their collective endeavor as equally telling as their individual talents.

From Hungary comes "Damn You! The Mosquitoes," from Miklos Jancso, a film loosely strung together by improvisational, freewheeling, free-spirited techniques, plus moments of tomfoolery intended to lift the ideologically war-ravaged spirit still reeling from socialist nightmares. Now 79, Jancso has finally eschewed the hard-line stance of historical analysis, finally shifting his remaining energies to the emerging post-socialist, chaotic culture of modern-day Hungary.

The Canadian entry, "Possible Worlds," by Robert Lepage, delves into the strange workings of the human mind, its intelligence totally unable to grasp the absurdities as well as contradictions of the possible worlds. A wildly cerebral filmmaker, Lepage retains his Kafkaesque spirit as he delves into the ghastly murder of a mysterious man, his brain neatly removed like Hannibal Lecter's victim.

A most worthy film comes through in "Chunhyang," a delicately and insightfully poignant period tale of love spurned, lost, regained and ultimately reigns triumphant. Reputedly Korea's largest production ever, made in the course of over a year, and involving thousands of extras, Im Kwon-taek's film examines Korea's feudal past by way of a forbidden love story between a courtesan's daughter and a nobleman, who defy all odds to be reunited at the end. The film comes more alive with the actual Pansori songs as a storytelling device, adroitly combining the elements of theater and cinema.

Panorama

Hong Kong Panorama, a regular section devoted to homegrown films, had a few entries this year, a telling commentary on Hong Kong's commercial film scene now in grave danger of total Hollywoodization. I caught "Lavender" by Ip Kam-hung, featuring the heartthrobs Takeshi Kaneshiro and Kelly Chen, playing the roles of an earth-bound angel and an aromatherapist, respectively. This altogether flighty piece of cornball romantic fantasy regrettably fails to lift our spirit, and the bad chemistry between the lead stars likewise fails to light up the heavens sorely in need of deliverance.

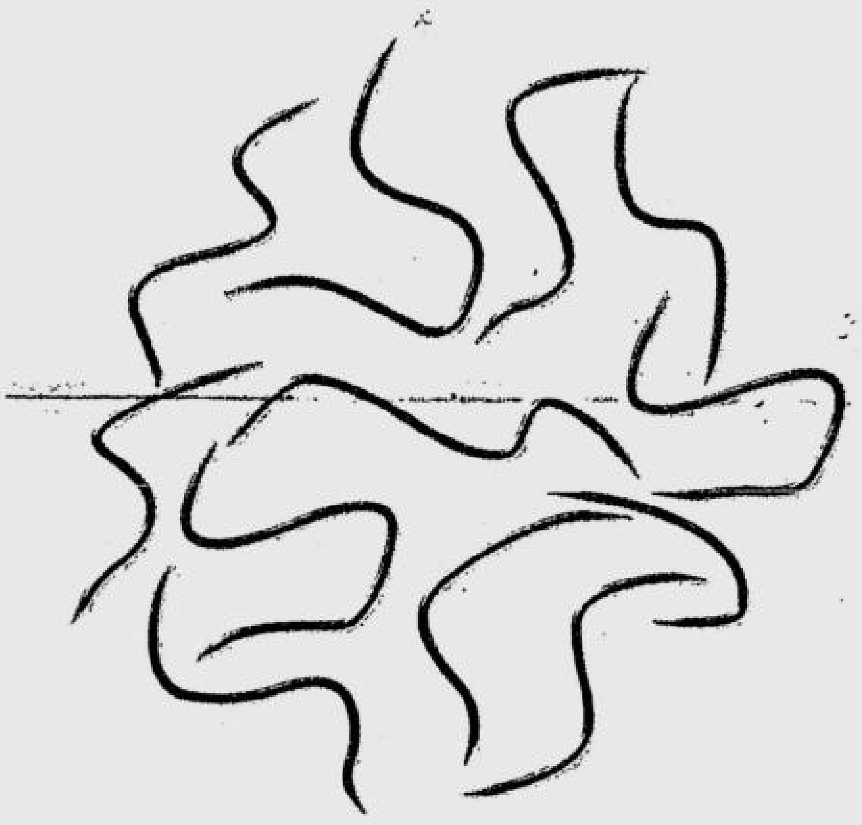
The entries under Asian Vision likewise are a mixed bag, with little surprises in store for film-weary viewers. From South Korea, Daniel Byun's "Interview" is touted as a merger of fiction and documentary, and succeeds at neither, encumbered as it by a long-winding process of having to put across its point in the film-within-film format. A more delightful film is "Barking Dogs Never Bite," also from Korea, which went on to win the Fifresci Award, with "Ge-Ge" from Hong Kong, as the best of young Asian talents. Bung Joon-ho's debut film is a satire on modern Korean society, set in a middle-class neighborhood, where a newlywed couple are at odds about the canine creature that inhabits their home. She loves the pet while he, in turn, is totally repulsed by its mere sight, eventually plotting ways to get rid of their festering noise. Other motley characters join in the fray—a dog-stew janitor and a hobo who has sought refuge in the building—and in the ensuing wildly comic chase for the missus' missing pet.

Hong Kong's "Ge-Ge (Brother)," also a first feature by Yan Yan Mak, is a different kind of road movie, shot in DVD format and blown up on the big screen, that takes us on a trip to Northern China, a strange country where the main character embarks on a search for his missing brother. The five-person Fifresci jury duly noted the film's powerful imagery, casually captured but are, in reality, carefully composed. Qinghai, a land recently devastated by natural disasters, serves as the locus of this personal journey that takes the character across cultural boundaries in both time and place. Innovative, effervescent and audacious, the film is colored by a romantic spirit that defies restrictions—commercial, cinematic and political—and makes for a liberating experience from big-bucks filmmaking.

Now comes a piece of fine cinema from Kyrgystan in Central Asia, "The Adopted Son," which examines the mores and morals of a desolate town through the eyes of a young boy approaching puberty. Directed by Aktan Abykalykov, this first feature may look and feel slow, tedious and even crude, but it evokes an authentic air about it, its utter simplicity and lack of pretension as the crux of the entire film about a boy's coming of age who must face up to the truth of his birth

HONGKONG/ p.F5

"THE CIRCLE"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TONY Leung in "In The Mood For Love"

Hong Kong

(From page F4)

and the role he must ultimately play in his society.

Women's film

From Iran comes "The Circle," directed by Jafar Panahi of "White Balloon" fame. The film, shown under the section New Century Women, explores the harsh realities that Iranian women must go through, a society where inequalities and oppression are day-to-day realities. The winner of the Golden Lion at last year's Venice Film Festival, the film is a touching tale of these parallel and intertwining lives, women who find no easy escape from their destiny, conjured in the film as a circle where this community of women ultimately end up in. Through these characters whose crises • are captured in minutiae, the film strikes a clarion call for their liberation, with their courage and strength as their ultimate weapons against injustice and inequality.

Hong Kong's "Glass Tears," written and directed by Carol Lai, explores the unchartered world of problem kids in this maze of a city suffering from growing-up pains. The transition from childhood to puberty is fraught with difficulties, generational mostly, though in the film the old (through her compassionate grandfather now living in an outlying island) strikes a bonding with the young that ultimately sets her free from her glass-encased existence.

An ostensibly more engaging film is Japan's "Sunflower," from Isao Yukisada, which concerns a young woman who is reported to have perished in a boat accident, and the ensuing funeral that reunites her former classmates in their fishing village where they muse over memories of their early years. A winner of the Fifresci Award at the Pusan, "Sunflower" conveys a delicacy of emotions culled from memories of lost persons who have been emotionally wounded, so aptly symbolized by the sunflower that is the metaphor for the film.

A most disappointing film is "Now Chinatown," written, directed and produced by Steven Dunning, who, besides acting in it, was all over the place to promote his feature debut. Armed with promotional tricks, Dunning apparently needed more than the help of his film's material to hype his maiden work. "Now Chinatown" is stale, melodramatic and so amateurish all the way it remains a mystery how it could have ended up in the festival.

It certainly takes more than guts and gumption to make it to the HKIFF, as many of our local filmmakers, with rejection slips in hand, have painfully learned all these years but will never ever tell.

German Film Week at Shangri-La Plaza

THE GOETHE-INSTITUT Manila and the Shangri-La Plaza Mall present the second German Film Week in Manila, a film festival showcasing a cross-section of 1997-1999 German productions, from April 26 to May 1, Cinema 2, Shangri-La Plaza Mall.

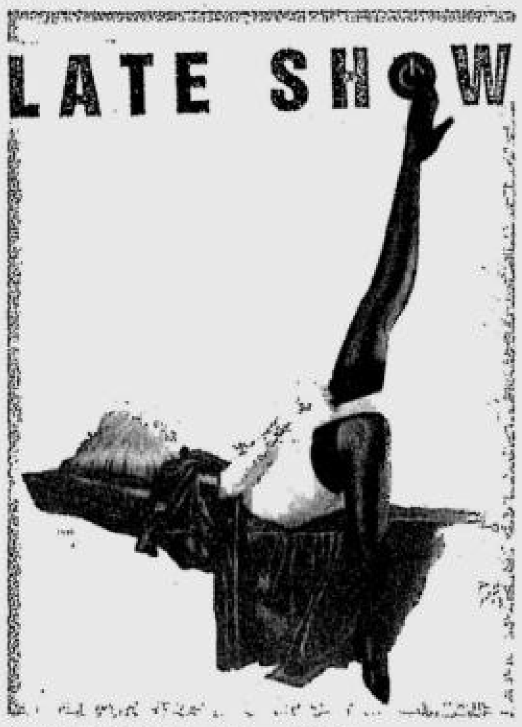
The festival features eight critically acclaimed contemporary films, all of which were Germany's official entries to the prestigious Berlin Film Festival. The Manila festival selection is compiled by noted German filmmaker, author and critic Christa Maerker, who was also responsible for bringing in last year's "Women and Film" of the first German Film Week at the Shangri-La Mall.

Opening film is multiawarded director Helmut Dietl's "Late Show" on April 26, a story about a new talk-show host for a TV production who meets intrigues instigated by the former ambitious mistress of the station manager. Dietl has received numerous prestigious awards, among them a German Film Prize for his first feature film in 1979 ("Der Durchdreher") and two German Film Awards and Golden Globe and Oscar nominations for "Schtonk!," his 1992 satire on the Hitler diaries scandal. His film "Rossini" in 1996 (one of the featured films in European Union's Cine Europa 3 at Shangri-La Plaza Mall last year) likewise received many awards, among them The German Film Prize for Best Picture and Best Director.

Variety characterizes this year's film selection. Cineastes will love award-winning director Frieder Schaich's "Otomo," a fiction story portrayed in a realistic, exciting and emotional manner. It is about an asylum seeker, Frederic Otomo, who stabs two policemen who attempt to arrest him.

A SCENE from the film "A Fatal Affair" by Michael Bartlett

"TUVALU" by Veit Helmer

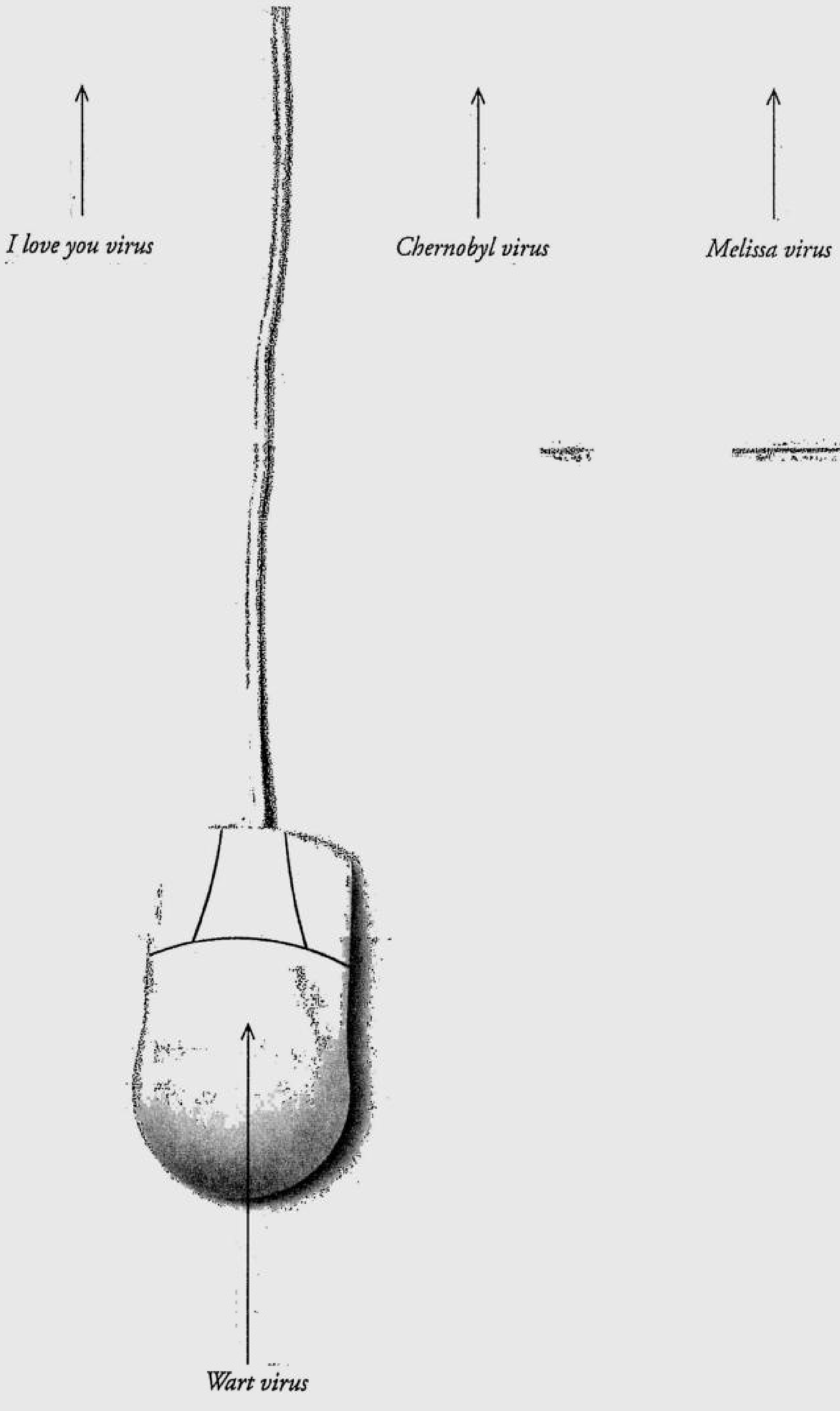


"LATE SHOW" by Helmut Dietl

Other films to look forward to are California-born musician-turned-movie director Michael Bartlett's romance drama "A Fatal Affair," Tom Wigand's "Soccer Rules!" (find out how a group of friends worships soccer to the extent of gambling away a house, accidentally kidnapping an arrogant football star and tearing apart their family) and Thomas Bahmann's tragicomedy "Our Island in the South Pacific."

Interesting, too, are debut feature films of young talented directors like Klaus Kramer's macabre comedy "Three Chinamen with a Double-Bass" (1999), Veit Helmer's idiosyncratic comedy "Tuvalu" and Hannu Salonen's teenage movie, the award-winning "Downhill City," which stars Franka Potente, who played the lead role in the critically acclaimed "Run Lola Run."

The festival will have three screenings per day starting April 27 until May 1. Screening time is at 3 p.m., 5:30 p.m. and 8 p.m. Tickets are available at the Shangri-La box office at P30. Call 635-2079.



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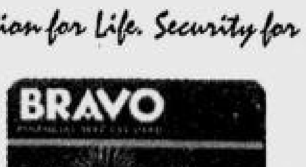


Journey into the world of healing arts

By Rowena C. Burgos

HEALTH and happiness have always been the two main goals of mankind, so linked are they that we have come to regard them as fundamental rights, along with life, liberty and religious freedom.

We strive to be healthy in order to be happy, but how many of us strive to be happy in order to be healthy?

This is one of the fundamental queries that Dr. Josef de Ubaldo answers in his fourth book entitled "Perspectives on Natural Health: An Anthology of Holistic Medicine," which will be launched tonight at 6 at the Makati A & B function rooms of the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

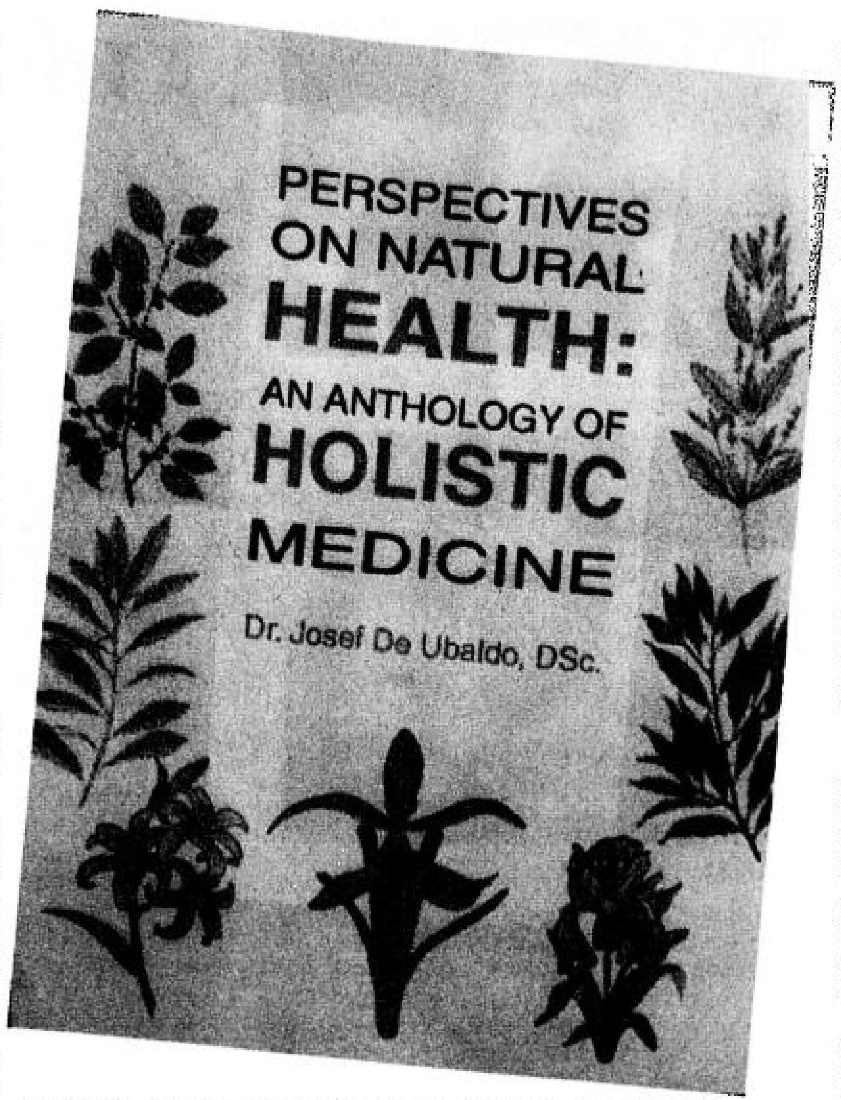
The question is not absurd. It explains the complaints of two out of every three persons who come to office of a physician for help. It's a sound psychological principle that, given the choice between being unhappy or unhealthy, most people unconsciously choose the physical pain of ill health rather than the mental pain of unhappiness.

Out of this principle has come the concept of holistic medicine or integrated healthcare which recognizes that all illnesses must be considered in relation to the entire person involved as well as the particular organs diseased, the mental as well as the physical state, the emotional as well as the physical environment.

JOSEF de Ubaldo, an advocate of holistic healing arts

We're not merely bodies which operate under the direction of a mind but an entirety which includes both body and mind, working in so close a relationship that no arbitrary separation is possible or should ever be made.

"Holistic medicine refers to natural healing and combining mind, body and spirit. It means the release of pent-up negative energies, resentment, baggages and replacing them with love and understanding," says Dr. De Ubaldo.


PERSPECTIVES ON NATURAL HEALTH: AN ANTHOLOGY OF HOLISTIC MEDICINE
Dr. Josef De Ubaldo, DSc.

"PERSPECTIVES ON NATURAL HEALTH" gives readers insights on the nature of integrated healthcare.

In his new book, integrated healthcare is discussed as an attitude, an industry, a traditional and social phenomenon and a science. Moreover, it is examined in the context of Philippine culture, society and government.

"Perspectives on Natural Health" consists of three parts. Part 1 contains all the researches and scientific papers presented by Dr. De Ubaldo in local and international conferences, articles written in organizations' newsletters, major dailies from 1996 to the present. Part 2 consists of profiles of organizations involved with natural health and herbal medicine. Part 3 is a guide to alternative therapies. Appendices are also provided to present the scenarios on the development of the natural health industry in the country and in the world.

Wounded child

Inspired by his friend Grace Imo Dee, Dr. De Ubaldo has been into natural healing since 1992 "after going through so many adversities. I was a wounded child myself so I underwent several therapies. But the best healer remains to be your own self. And all you have to do is to stay connected with your divine self."

After six years, he earned a doctorate in Alternative Medicines from the Open University for Complementary Medicine in Colombo, Sri Lanka and the Lifetime Achievement Award during the World Congress on Alternative Medicines held in Calcutta, India.

A long-time student and practitioner of holistic therapy, Dr. De Ubaldo has published three books: "Integrated Healthcare in the Philippines: Guide to Mind, Body and Spirit," "Healing Arts for the 21st Century" and "Perspectives on Natural Health and Herbal Medicines."

Of late, he was named ambassador and official correspondent of the World Federation of Integrated and Complementary Medicine, United Kingdom.

The third in a brood of five, Dr. De Ubaldo says he was wounded while still inside the womb of his mother. "She'd like to abort me then. But I'm still thankful to them because I would not have become a better person now. There are people who are ashamed to admit that they've been wounded because of the stigma attached to it. But no matter how much one's wounded, you can still be healed."

"Perspectives on Natural Health" is the result of Dr. De Ubaldo's "total healing." "We do not cure symptomatic illness but using the holistic health paradigm, we delve into the root cause to creatively apply relevant therapies. In the course of research and analysis, I've learned the values of compassion, understanding, altruism and loving."

E-mail the author at rburgos @inquirer. com.ph

'Ragtime' author strikes again

(From page F8)

On the other hand, the durable songs like "Stardust" and "Me and My Shadow" are deconstructed by the Crooner before an audience which applauds heartily, claps politely, or starts to leave, depending on how they take to these interpretations and new meanings of the standards.

As for the movies, the art of the 20th century, the author indicates that they seem to have taken over our lives, such that it is sometimes difficult to distinguish between acting and real life.

World War I unfolds through the eyes of Pem's father, who fought in the trenches of Europe. And World War II is seen through the perspective of Ronald, Pem's older brother, who, as an Air Force radioman, flew in combat missions over occupied France.

The most chilling and riveting of the episodes is the Holocaust, as recalled by Yehoshua, Sarah's father, in conversations with her.

Yehoshua, then a 10-year-old child, was one of the runners for the Jewish Council in a Lithuanian concentration camp established by the Germans during the early 1940s.

Bit by bit, the reader visualizes the harsh life in the ghetto, the atrocities committed by the Nazis, the slave-like existence of the Jews, the armed resistance in the countryside, the children deprived of a childhood, and the growing terror which engulfs the camp as the Germans begin to panic and the Russian army approaches.

This novel is complex, occasionally confusing (some of the characters remain shadowy) but more often eminently readable and unputdownable. After 40 years, Doctorow has not lost his touch. If anything, he has improved with age. And "City of God" may well be his masterwork.

THAMES administration people pose with students.

Thames holds UK education fair

THAMES International Business School, with Mentor International, an education consultancy from Bangkok, held recently the UK Education Fair 2001 at the Manila Galleria Suites.

Representatives from some of UK's most prestigious universities flew in for the event to assist Filipino students and professionals in obtaining a UK education.

Among those present were Vivienne Tan, Thames CEO; John Kelly, Mentor International managing director; Joel Santos, Thames director; Elaine Lew and Padma Ramachandran from Middlesex University; Fiona Robertson from the University of Birmingham; Winston Ningkan from Thames Valley University; Angela Holland from the University of Hertfordshire; and Alan Jarman from Oxford Brookes University.

Visitors attended free seminars given by Mentor International and Thames International Business School. Topics included the UK Master's program and obtaining UK degree through Thames.

Thames allows Filipinos to graduate with a foreign degree without the usual costs and constraints. The concept allows students to take the first two years in a Philippine campus and finish the last two years in any affiliate university in the UK.

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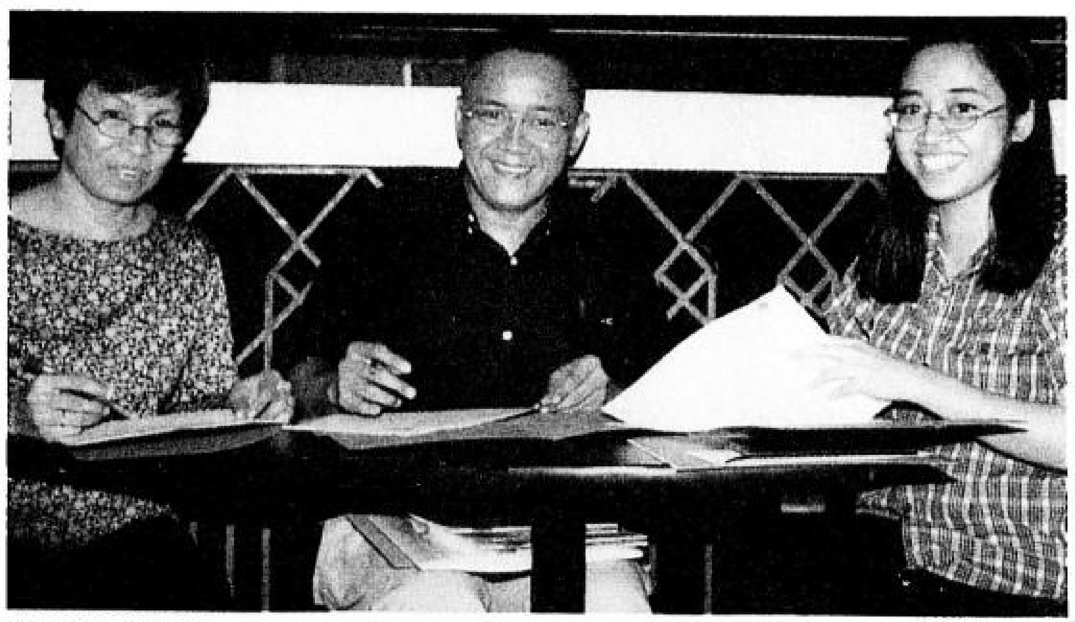

MULTIAWARDED writer Rene Villanueva (center) will handle the National Bookstore's writing workshops for kids and young adults ages 10-16, from April 30 to May 6 at the National Bookstore-Superbranch, Cubao. Villanueva is shown signing the agreement with marketing manager Letty Cid and children's books promoter Karen Alba. Call 912-7135 or 911-2261.

Remembering a friend . . .

(From page F2)

Nuestra Señora de Salera.

Marian exhibit

AN EXHIBIT of Marian images will be held at the Hospicio de San Jose from May 2-16 by the Centrum Catolicum Virgo Mariae Roca. Rosary vigils and documentary film showings of Marian shrines here and abroad are scheduled during the exhibition. The Nuestra Señora de la Rosa, the patroness of the group, will be crowned on May 12 at 4 p.m. at the chapel of the Hospicio.

A special feature of the exhibit is the collection of *relleves* of the Madonna and Child done by master carver Maestro Juan Flores. For details, please call Nicky Legazpi at the National Museum at 527-1219.

Angel Society membership

JERRY Salazar, president of the Angel Society, says that they're now accepting new members. Those interested can write him at 0539 Quirino Ave., San Dionisio, Parañaque.

Secretarial student needs help

JONALYN Francisco is anxious to finish her two-year secretarial course at the Philippine Christian University. She needs tuition assistance when she enrolls for the next school year. Those who want to help can beep me at 141-020543. Thank you for your kindness.

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UST writers' workshop, forum on literature teaching in Baguio

THE SECOND Annual UST National Writers Workshop opens today at the Paraiso ni Quezon Hotel in Baguio City. The five-day intensive writers' clinic, organized by the UST Center on Creative Writing and Studies (UST-CCWS), will focus on poetry and fiction.

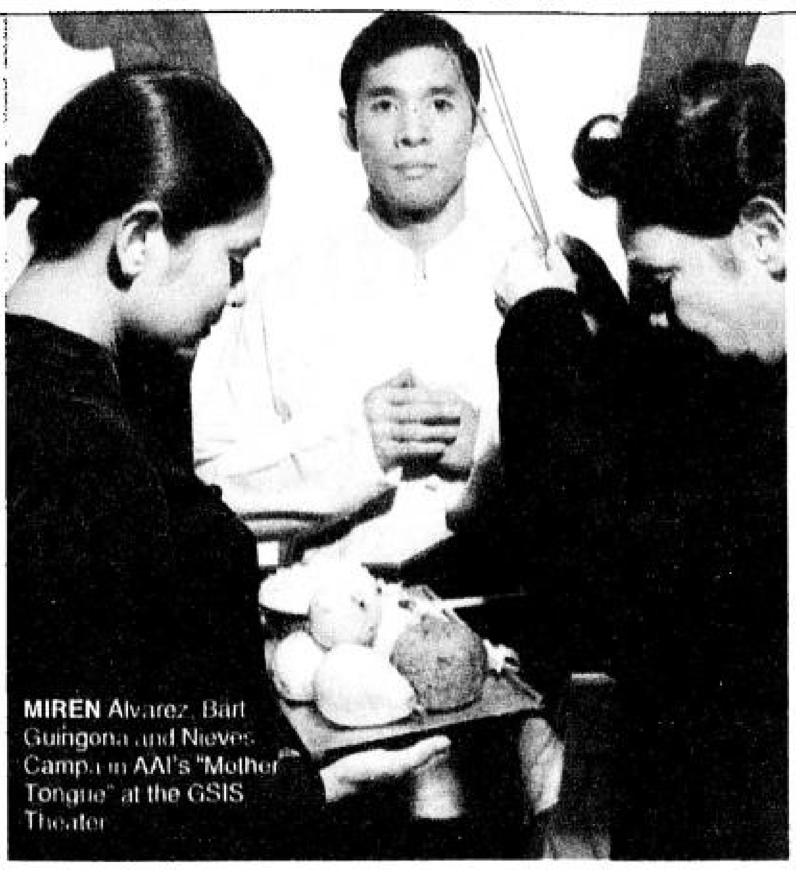
Twelve young writers from around the country have been granted fellowships to attend the workshop. Leading the workshop panel are Centennial Literary Prix winner Cirilo Bautista, National Artist-elect F. Sionil Jose and 1999 SEA Write awardee Ophelia Alcantara-Dimalanta.

Other panelists are Rebecca Anonuevo, Ramil Gulle, Lourd de Veyra, Mike Coroza, Ralph Galan, Ferdinand Lopez and Lito Zulueta.

On April 27, UST-CCWS will hold its traditional "UST-ingan," a round-table discussion on literary issues. The afternoon forum will focus on "New Currents in the Teaching of Literature and Creative Writing."

Afterward, before the workshop closes, UST-CCWS will launch the third issue of Tomas, the official literary journal of UST. The issue includes new writings of senior and junior associates of the Center, as well as of Australia-based Filipina writer Merlinda Bobis, Tunisian-French poet Amina Said, young Scottish bard Roddy Lumsden and British fictionist Suzannah Dunn.

The conference and book launching are open to teachers, students and lovers of literature.



MIREN Alvarez, Bart Guingona and Nieves Campa in AAI's "Mother Tongue" at the GSIS Theater

Last performances of 'Mother Tongue'

HERE'S your last chance to catch AAI's original Filipino offering for their TNT Series 2, "Mother Tongue." Starring stage stalwart Bart Guingona, "Mother Tongue" marks his return to the stage after a year of concentrating on directing. With him are movie star Kate Fernandez, and the mother-and-daughter tandem of Nieves Campa and Miren Alvarez, two of the most widely acclaimed stage actresses in the country today.

Alternately hilarious and poignant, "Mother Tongue" is a comic drama about what it means to be lost in a global village of warring tongues. Prof. David Lee, the alter ego of the play's author Paul Stephen Lim, finds himself teaching English to Americans in Kansas and tries to complete a play he is writing while wrestling with ghosts of his mother, his lover and other personages of his past and present. All of them conspire to force him to confront his own sense of identity and belonging in a world where his skin color and his culture make him speak out even as he tries to belong.

"Mother Tongue" is directed by Tanghalang Pilipino's associate artistic director Chris Millado, a Fulbright scholar and former artistic director of Peta. "Mother Tongue" has its last performances on April 27 and 28, 8 p.m., and April 29, 3 p.m., at the GSIS Theater. Tickets are available at Ticketworld and Ticketnet. Call AAI at 536-5844 or visit their website at www.actorsactors.com.

Two new books by New Age author Tony Perez

ANVIL Publishing Inc. releases two new books from best-selling New Age author Tony Perez titled "Stories of the Moon: More Adventures of the Spirit Questors" and "Songs of Sunset: Incantations and Spells by the Spirit Questors." It will be launched on May 5, 3 p.m., at the Maryknoll Ecological Sanctuary, Baguio City.

Cowritten by Spirit Questors Michael Marlo R. Duque and Dion Michael Fernandez, "Stories of the Moon" features accounts of different quests participated in by all three writers. These quest narratives present three distinct voices: Perez writes from accounts of the actual mediums who communicate with the spirits, while Duque and Fernandez write from their own contact with the spirits.

"Songs of the Sunset" is a three-part book that features prayers, incantations and poetry written by Perez and his group of gifted young Questors. The first part of the volume, subtitled "The Adviser's Verses," consists of incantations written to accompany "Ensorcelled Pieces," a series of oil pastels by Perez and Questor Victor Olano. The second part of the volume, subtitled "The Questors' Verses," consists of incantations authored by the group. The third and final part of the book is "Cell Phone Spells," which features practical spells that can be performed with a mobile phone. These spells are meant to wish others good fortune, locate missing property or person, exercising influence on a person, act or event, merging your heart's desire, among others.

Perez leads the Spirit Questors, a group of gifted young, psychic volunteers who render service to the public by way of conducting sessions to enable the living to communicate with the dead or the earth spirits. He is currently enrolled in the master's degree program in religious studies at the Maryhill School of Technology and is teaching at the De La Salle University. He is a multiawarded playwright and fictionist, and author of several books such as the Cubao fiction series and the best-selling "Ang Panibagong Kulam," "Ang Panibagong Tawas," "Beings," "The Departed" and "The Calling."

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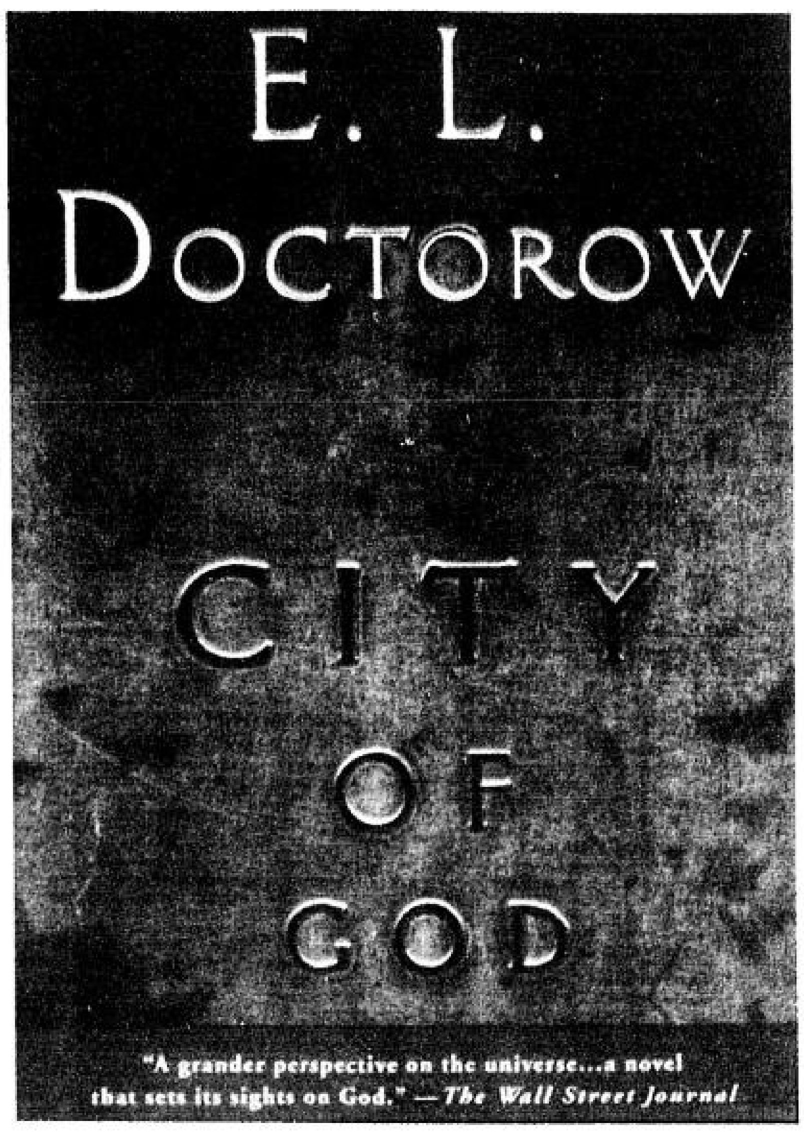
'Ragtime' author strikes again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DOCTOROW
CITY OF GOD
"A grander perspective on the universe...a novel that sets its sights on God." —The Wall Street Journal

Doctorow may have written his finest work

"City of God"
By E. L. Doctorow
Plume Books, 272 pages
2001

BY AMADIS MA. GUERRERO

SINCE 1960, when "Welcome to Hard Times" was published, E.L. Doctorow has published some 10 novels, some of them masterpieces, like "Ragtime" (1975) and "Billy Bathgate" (1989).

REVIEW

"Ragtime" has since become a classic, a cult novel, made into a film and Broadway musical. Set in the early part of the 20th century, it tells the captivating story of three fictional families whose lives become enmeshed with those of famous, real-life people like tycoons Henry Ford and J.P. Morgan, the anarchist Emma Goldman and the magician Harry Houdini.

"Billy Bathgate," equally hypnotic, was written in the same trademark style of Doctorow: dense, long paragraphs with a minimum of dialogue, propelled by vivid images and characterization. It is one long flashback as the narrator Billy, now grownup and educated, recalls his involvement with the gangster Dutch Schultz (played by Dustin Hoffman in the film version) and his moll, the socialite Miss Drew (played by Nicole Kidman), during the Depression.

After this novel, there was a long silence from Doctorow. He came out with a collection of essays on Hemingway and Jack London, then recently returned to the novel form with "Waterworks" and, finally, "City of God." The title was taken from the opus by St. Augustine ("Augie, A hell of a writer"), but the resemblance ends there.

Doctorow's "City of God" is an ambitious novel of events and ideas, difficult at times (what with all those reflections on the cosmos) but full of surprises and twists and turns, always provocative and written in a street-smart language. The reader is simply swept along by the narratives, by the literary pyrotechnics.

There are shifting points of view, multiple voices and anonymous characters: a father-in-law who calls himself "Faux Pop," a crooner, a filmmaker and an "ex-Times guy" who becomes a vigilante.

Thus, from a terrifying recollection of life in a Jewish ghetto controlled by brutal Nazis, the narrative shifts to high-flown thoughts on the origin of the universe and on metaphysics, and then to an adulterous affair which is being envisioned as a film.

More experimental

Doctorow fans will immediately discern a style different from the previous novels. "City of God" is more experimental, with long as well as short paragraphs, stream of consciousness and even free verse, which approximates a long poem.

As the 20th century draws to a close, the main characters, who live and work in New York, embark on an unconventional, unorthodox search for God in the wake of the disasters of the century: two World Wars, invasions, massacres, colonial violence, pogroms, ethnic cleansing and other atrocities:

"The world is a big bloody human circus of mutilation, with a degree of murderous, insane rage to blast the planet off its axis..."

Tying up most of the loose threads of the novel is the writer-character identified simply as Everett, who is writing the "spiritual biography" of his friend Father Pem, an Episcopalian priest who is drawn to the widowed rabbi Sarah, who runs the Synagogue of Evolutionary Judaism.

Swirling around these three are the other characters, their stories seemingly unrelated; but they stand for some event or some feature of the 20th century, including philosophy, standard songs and films.

There is the philosophy professor Ludwig Wittgenstein, whose thoughts are sometimes too profound for his students. This enables author Doctorow to indulge in some philosophizing while spoofing philosophy and its intricacies.

'RAGTIME'/p.F6

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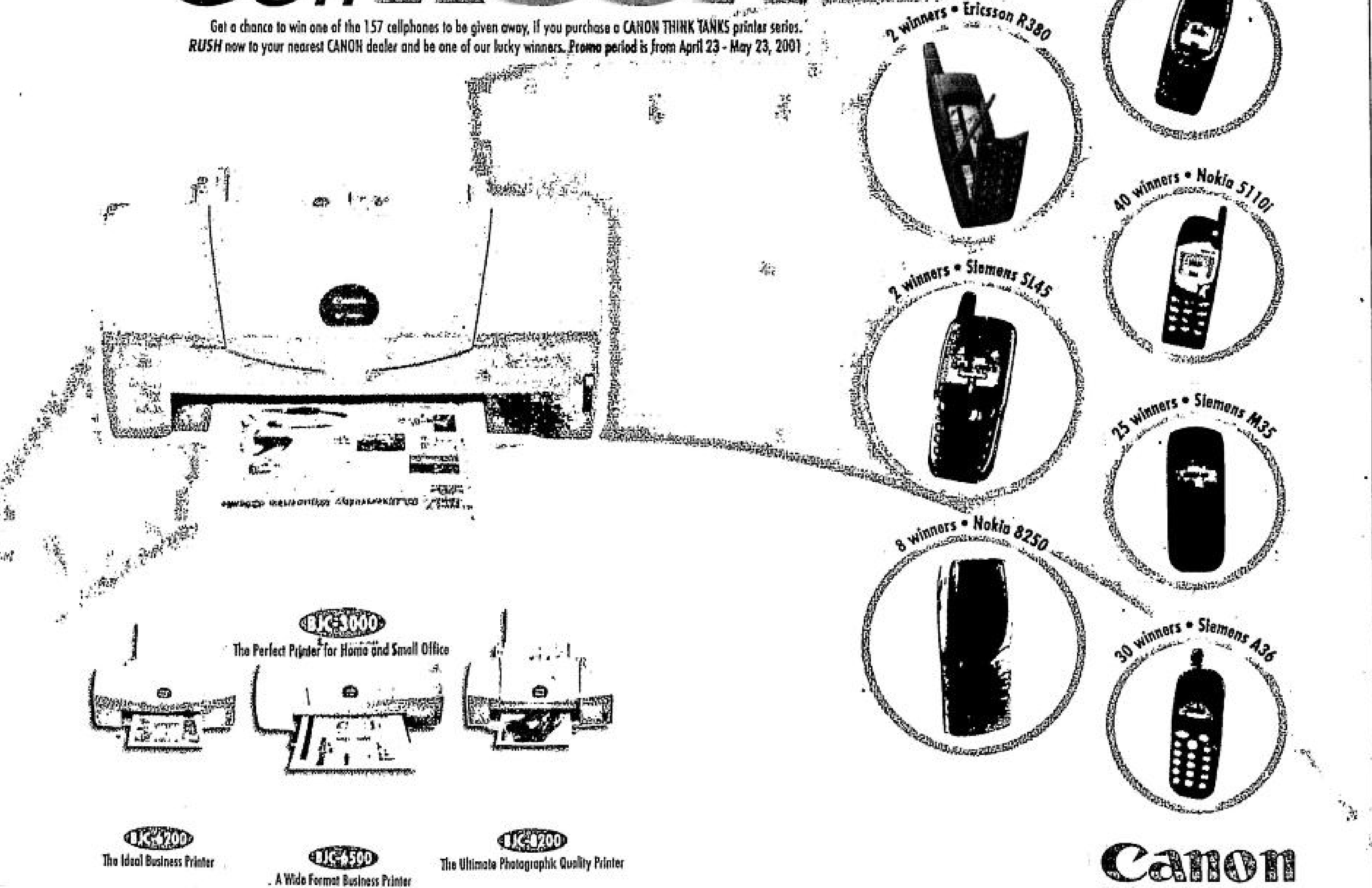

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5. A total of 4 weekly raffle draws will be held at the Canon Marketing Philippines, Inc. head office located at Marvin Plaza Bldg., Pasong Tamo, Makati City at 5 p.m.

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May 13	May 16	40 winners of Nokia 5110i
May 20	May 23	50 winners of Nokia 3310

6. A participant can only win once during the promo period.
7. All non winning entries will be qualified for the succeeding weekly draws and for the grand raffle draw.
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INFOTECH

LEO MAGNO, Editor

Gov't to strengthen RP market in wake of global infotech slowdown

BY ROBERT GERARD A. PLAZA

THE GOVERNMENT aims to strengthen the domestic market to meet the challenges of a global slowdown in key sectors, including information and communications technology (ICT), President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo said in a news conference.

Ms Macapagal said the government's efforts in strengthening business, particularly the ICT sector, would continue despite the slowdown.

"But this means we have to widen our options," Ms Macapagal said. "This means strengthening our small and medium enterprises, many of which serve the domestic market. And the best way to strengthen them is through the availability of credit."

The President said that the Department of Trade and Industry is taking the initiative to expand the country's sources of growth, not just for the ICT sector. Ms Macapagal said that her administration would continue its three-point program for ICT growth. This strategy includes interconnectivity at low rates, availability of human resources, and the policy toward true convergence in the provision of key information-based services should be pursued. Providing tax or fiscal incentives, she said, is not the means to protect the fledgling industry.

"ICT does not work through incentives," Ms Macapagal said. "I think ICT is not one of those industries very sensitive to fiscal incentives but rather to infrastructure and policies promoting convergence."

She reiterated the niche of the country in the New Economy as falling under the skills-intensive human resource service sectors.

Macapagal to head ICT body, to create infotech department

BY ERWIN LEMUEL G. OLIVA

FOLLOWING examples set by Singapore and Thailand, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo on Friday proposed the creation of an information and communications technology (ICT) department to speed up "digital convergence" in the Philippines. Macapagal has also accepted the chairmanship of the Information Technology and Electronic Commerce Council (ITECC)—the country's highest ICT policymaking body—in an effort to "accelerate decision-making" and activities related to ICT in the Philippines.

The ICT department would be created under a proposed convergence law. It is expected to define policy for the ICT sector and regulate activities in this sector.

"I will transmit to the next Congress as a priority measure a comprehensive convergence bill that will define the principles, policies and administrative and regulative framework that will allow digital convergence to flourish in this country," Ms Macapagal said.

Ms Macapagal said that the convergence bill would also address "current economic and technological realities" that are not covered under existing laws. The President, however, did not specify how this would affect the existing Department of Transportation and Communications.

The convergence bill also seeks to reorganize the National Telecommunications Commission (NTC) into a National Infocoms Commission, Ms Macapagal said. She also did not specify how the reorganization would take place. The NTC is currently the regulatory body overseeing activities of the telecommunications sector.

"In the Philippines, we are already seeing the merger of two leading cable companies, a telecoms company buying into a TV station, and telecoms companies offering convergence services. While these developments are in response to market developments, government must ensure that the emergent entities will not engage in anti-competitive practices. An important principle that will be inscribed in this proposed Convergence law is competition. Convergence can lead to full service companies that are even bigger than the ones that are currently existing," Ms Macapagal added.

The idea of creating an ICT department was floated as early as 1992 by Rep. Leandro Verceles of Catanduanes. Known to

MACAPAGAL/p.G2

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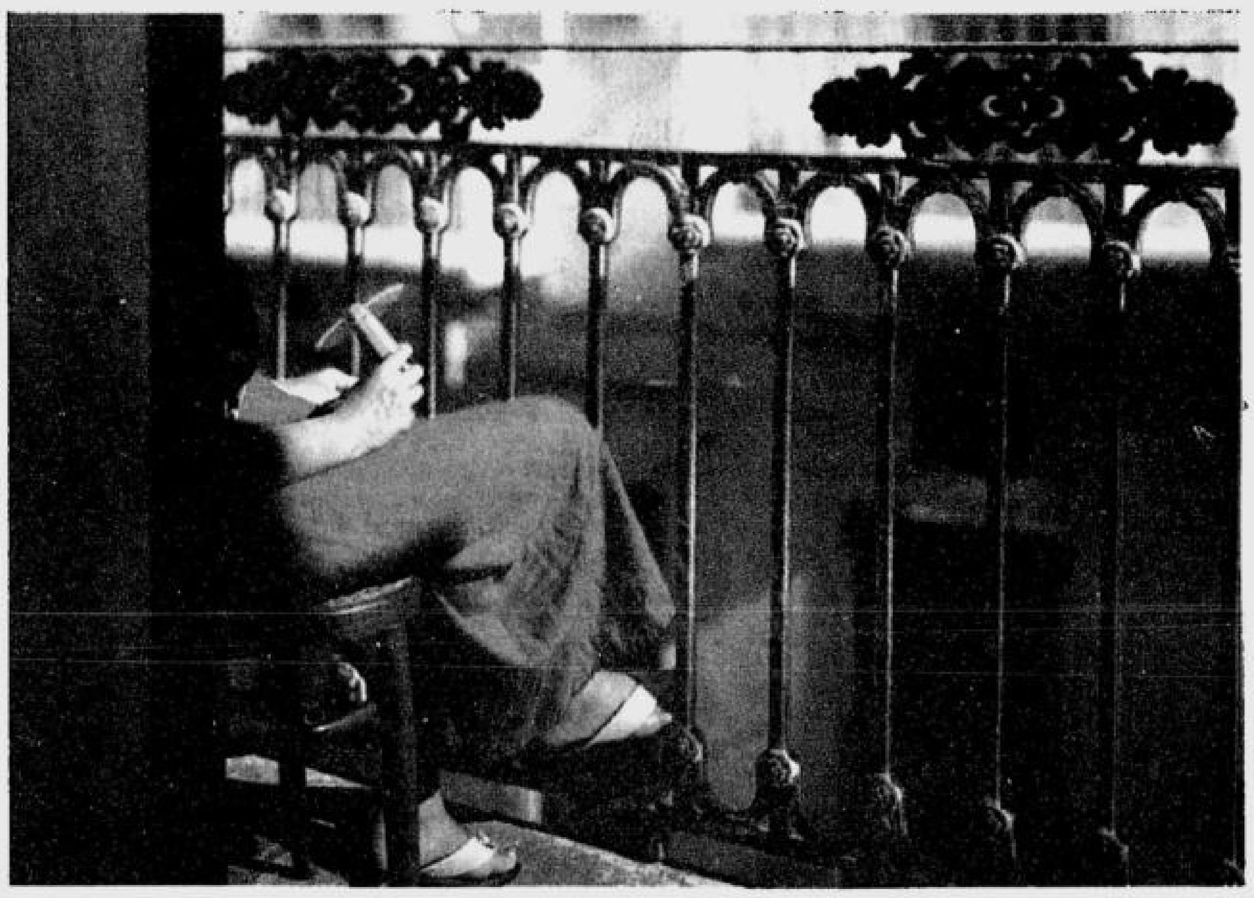

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ERICSSON

Bell Telecom offers wireless broadband network instead of costly rollout of fixed lines

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

AN EXECUTIVE living somewhere in Alabang wanted access to his corporate local area network (LAN) at his office in Makati. So the executive asked his service provider if they could find a way to allow him access to his corporate account even while at home. Well, he got what he wanted, and more. His service provider gave him a wireless and remote connection to his office e-mail and LAN.

This unnamed executive is among the satisfied customers of Bell Telecommunications Philippines Inc. (BellTel), the country's newest telco player. This story is often told by its CEO and president, Edgardo Reyes, to potential customers who are often skeptical about the company's claim that it offers a real wireless broadband access at distances reaching 12 kilometers, or even more.

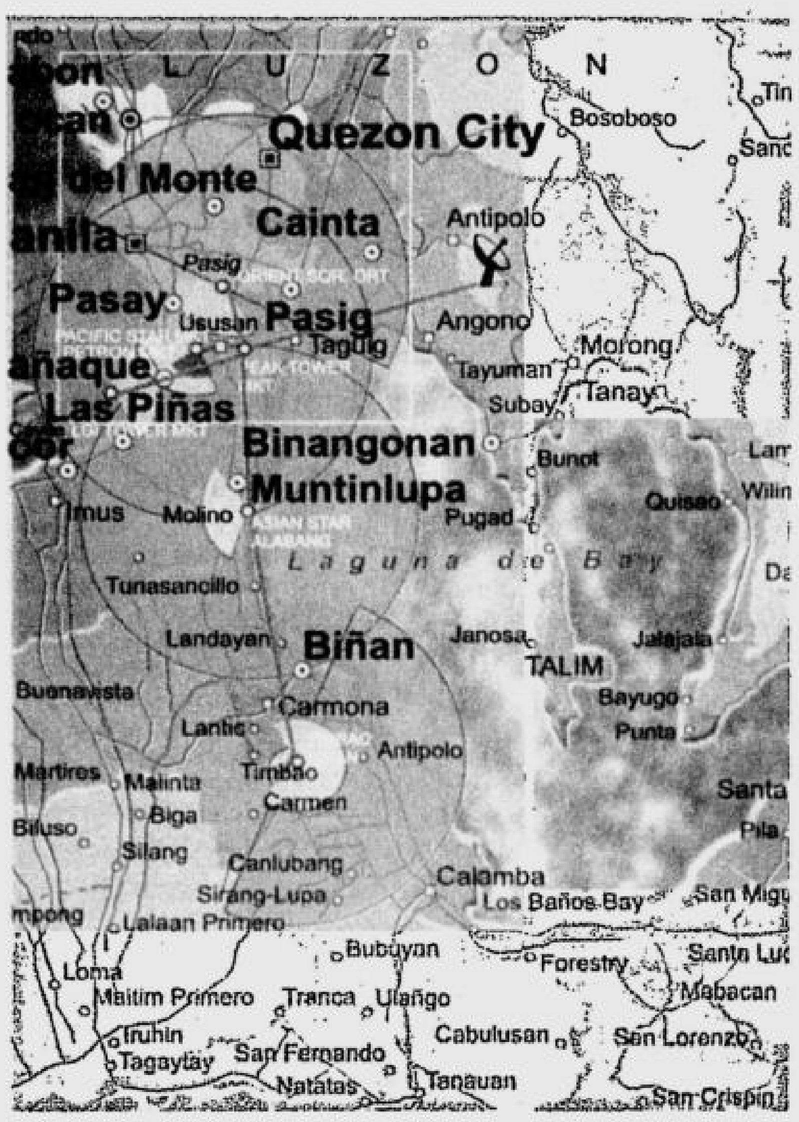
The company's secret is no secret after all.

Considering that government only granted the company a license to operate in the Philippines in 1997, BellTel was lucky enough not to be tied down to so-called "legacy" systems. Ironically, the delays allowed the company to invest on newer technology that would put it ahead of the pack.

Last year, the company signed a $120-million deal with Siemens AG group of Germany. The deal involved acquiring wireless equipment with broadband access.

Under pressure to roll out 300,000 lines, BellTel decided to go for a wireless system as a solution to the problem of rolling out lines in the quickest time possible in its designated service areas identified by government.

The National Telecommunications Commission was ready to revoke the company's license as early as March, but was later given a reprieve, and given 18 months to fulfill government's requirements.



THE SERVICE areas of Bell Telecom's wireless broadband offering are indicated by the red circles.

BellTel is required to deliver telecommunications services to various areas in Metro Manila, including Muntinlupa, Las Piñas, Pasig, Mandaluyong, Makati, Pasay, Parañaque, Pateros, Taguig, Marikina and San Juan.

With its broadband wireless system in place, BellTel now offers wireless telecom and data services from several "central" points covering a 12-km range in Metro Manila down to Laguna, south of Metro Manila.

"In the six months of the rollout of our wireless system, we were able to cover areas beginning from Marikina to Canlubang, Laguna," said Joby de Belen, vice president for sales and marketing of BellTel.

Compared with laying down ordinary copper or fiber optic lines, the wireless system requires no massive digging or installation because it uses radio signals instead of physical lines to transmit data.

BellTel now boasts of using fiber optic cables and three-overlaying wireless networks, and ATM backbone technology in delivering wireless broadband access in the country.

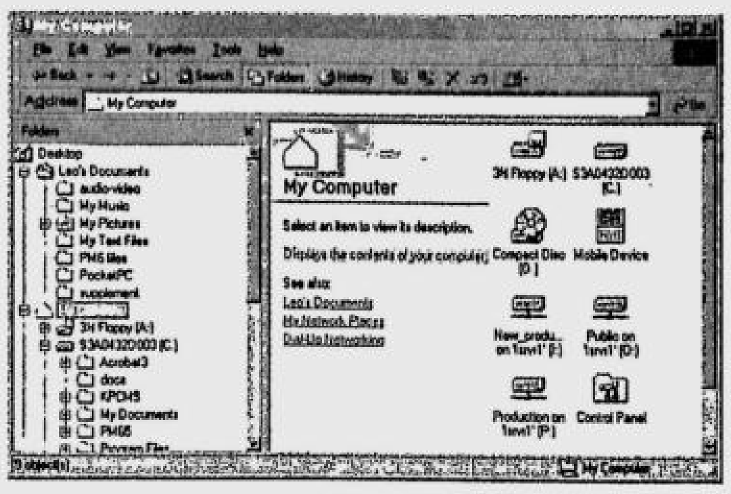
The company is currently at its first phase of rolling out the wireless network. The first phase covers the entire Metro Manila area, and parts of the surrounding provinces south of Metro Manila. The wireless network can offer high-speed data services from 32 Kbps to 155 Mbps, as well as basic voice telephony.

The second phase would involve replicating these wireless networks in Cavite, Batangas, then Cebu, according to Reyes.

The company has secured specific radio frequencies that will be used by the wireless network. These frequencies include 1.7, 3.5 and 24 Ghz bands, providing the company a broad array of wireless services from the short-range LMDS or long-range CDMA wireless technology.

"There are no excuses for us this time not to deliver telecommunications services to our service areas," De Belen remarked.

BellTel was established out of a joint venture of several families engaged in various businesses, and South China Resources Inc., an oil and exploration firm. These family run corporations include the Puyat-Reyes, Ortigas, Madrigal-Bayot and Maramba families.



YOU can select files to be removed from the Documents folder of the Start button from Windows Explorer

Selecting files to remove from Start/Documents

By Jerry Liao

IF you want to remove one document file at a time under the Start/ Documents section, follow these simple steps :

(1) Run Windows Explorer and go to the Windows Directory

(2) Select View, then Options

(3) Select View, then Tab

(4) Select "Show all files" and then click "OK"

(5) Go back to Windows Directory

(6) Select Recent Folder

(7) Delete the file you want to remove or display on the Documents Folder

For more tips, visit www.brainshare.com.ph.

We would like to invite our readers to join the Powertips Group. Simply send your name, address, age, profession and company to infochat@mozcom.com and receive free tips via e-mail. For questions, comments and suggestions, send e-mail to infochat @mozcom.com.

Civil registry records now accessible online

By Robert Gerard Plaza

FILIPINOS could now be relieved of burdensome queues in obtaining their birth, marriage and even death certificates of loved ones. Further, they need not be in the Philippines to acquire them. The National Statistics Office (NSO) recently unveiled a three-pronged distribution system of civil registry documents for local residents and, soon, overseas Filipinos through a build-operate-transfer arrangement with Unisys Philippines.

The system, expected to ease the burden of Filipinos seeking birth, marriage, or death certificates from the NSO's offices in Quezon City, would decentralize the distribution of civil registry documents. Called the Civil Registry System-Information Technology Project, the venture aims to provide NSO documents to Filipinos wherever they are through "neighborhood" distribution outlets, a 24-hour call center, and a Web-based online service.

"The CRS-ITP is a solution toward enhanced public service," said Tomas Africa, NSO administrator and civil registrar-general.

Using the system, the NSO would soon provide "while-you-wait" processing of document requests and the "request anywhere" facility for thousands of NSO customers through the CRS-ITP Metro Manila Census Serbilis Center.

According to a press statement, six Metro Manila outlets and 78 regional/provincial CRS outlets will be established nationwide. The project schedule, the statement further said, includes the establishment of 13 regional outlets by 2002. The outlets would be set up to bring the NSO's services closer to the public and provide people with a more convenient and cost-effective means of acquiring copies of birth, marriage, and death certificates. Through these outlets, customers can get copies of their NSO documents "while they wait." These outlets can process and authenticate requests electronically, allowing applicants to obtain their documents right away.

"We aim to achieve our targets," said Al Castro, Unisys implementation manager for the NSO-CRS project. "The first Metro Manila outlet will be partly operational soon. Other Metro Manila outlets will be opened by mid-2001."

Helpline Plus Pinoy is a 24-hour call center for Filipinos to request civil registry documents from the NSO. The nationwide center, powered by Pilipinas Teleserv Inc., accepts applications for document copies through a phone call. It also offers civil registration guidelines, quick NSO statistics on population, foreign and domestic trade, business, labor and employment and other NSO-generated information. About 1,000 to 2,200 applications are processed daily through the call center, the NSO claims. By dialing the call center's access number, (02)-737-1111, customers are connected to a customer care operator who takes down vital information

CIVIL/p.G4

Macapagal to head ICT body . . .

(From page G1)

be a staunch advocate of ICT in the government sector, Verceles was asked by Ms Macapagal to submit a blueprint for the ICT sector. Part of his proposal was to convert the Department of Transportation and Communications into the Department of Information and Communications Technology.

"There are similar thrusts in Singapore and Thailand. The DOTC's transportation arm may then merge with the Department of Public Works and Highways to be called the Department of Transportation, Highways and Other Public Works. This new inter-modal department will benefit by having a more focused objective of causing the synergy among the air, land (highways and roads) and marine transportation linkages. Small public works may be concurrently administered by the DPWH and the local government units," Verceles wrote in his proposal.

He said that "if the reformation of the DOTC and DPWH is not immediately possible, then the information technology function may still be absorbed by the DOTC and a Department of Information and Communications Technology and Transportation, or DICTT, could then form."

Meanwhile, the ITECC, which Ms Macapagal will chair, was created after the merger of the Department of Science and Technology-led National Information Technology Council and the Department of Trade and Industry's (DTI) E-commerce Promotion Council. It was created last year under Executive Order 264 on July 13.

The ITECC is currently co-chaired by Trade Secretary Manuel Roxas II and e-Asean Task Force chair Roberto Romulo.

The ITECC members represent several government agencies with IT-related functions, and the private sector.

The President's decision "signals the full commitment of the government and the private sectors to transform the Philippines into a knowledge-based economy," according to Roxas. "The President's leadership is a change for more organizational effectiveness in the Council," Roxas added.

Romulo said that Ms Macapagal has accepted the position because she wanted to "enhance, expand and accelerate decision-making" in the Council.

"Ms Macapagal gave instant orders immediately after accepting the position," said Romulo, senior adviser on international competitiveness.

Ms Macapagal earlier expanded the Council's role from the body tasked to oversee implementation of the E-commerce Law to manning the country's ICT activities and policies.

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MIC CE FC

Big Blue to balance enterprise system resources with new OS

By Robert Gerard Plaza

REALLOCATION of precious system resources to run a growing number of processing-intensive business applications is increasingly recognized as the boon of productive mission critical enterprises. This is most appropriate in the configuration of file and application servers throughout the enterprise network, where performance and availability are elemental factors in surviving the e-business age.

Enter IBM's z/OS, the new 64-bit operating system for the IBM eServer z900, the repackaged S/390 positioned for e-businesses. While running z/OS on the z900, the server can automatically reallocate processing power to select applications on the fly, depending on the system workload demands at a given time. As such, it provides capacity and processing functions to simultaneously run S/390- or z900-developed applications across a multitude of logical partitions, thereby allowing a virtual "server farm" in one box.

The z900 also provides capability for Linux-based and legacy OS/390 platforms. The OS features an Intelligent Resource Director (IRD), introduced recently. According to Edmund Tan, product manager for the IBM eServer z900 line, the IRD allows the system to provide "unlimited capacity" and "non-disruptive scalability" based on policies defined by the user.

"What we are providing today is software that allows the Z900 to maximize on its inherent processing power to deliver multitudes of applications and services on the fly," Tan said. "It allows enterprises to save on hardware while increasing the capabilities of its software."

Other key benefits of the z/OS include 64-bit real storage and simplified setup. Web-based wizard technology is offered at setup, making special "mainframe skills" unnecessary in configuring the system. Step-by-step dialog wizards are offered to simplify installation and configuration.

Further enhancements are due to become available later this year with the introduction of the z/OS 1.2. These include the IRD for Linux, networking advances that will use server memory to allow information to travel at memory speed across logical partitions, minimizing network latency, maximizing bandwidth and improving availability.

Intrusion detection, distributed security, digital certificates, directory services and cryptography would also be introduced in the coming upgrade. In addition, Tan said, enhanced z/OS technology makes possible an "unprecedented" licensing arrangement with users, through revamped software pricing.

New to IBM and exclusive to z900 and z/OS customers, software licenses would be managed and charged depending on actual usage of software applications per logical partition. Charging has been based previously on a per-box license. Software fees will be based on need, rather than total system capacity, providing customers with the choice of paying only for the capacity they would use, processing power required or service made available on the software.

However, if the user has a copy of the same software running in another OS—say Linux—in another partition, the new pricing scheme would not apply.

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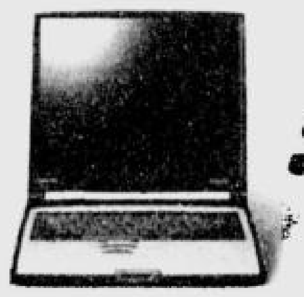

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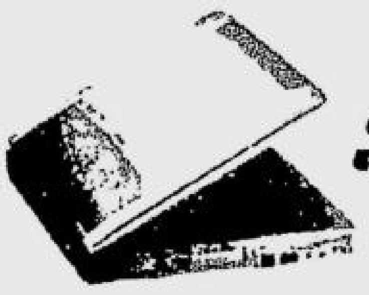

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DTI referees .PH domain row

By Erwin Lemuel G. Oliva

THE DEPARTMENT of Trade and Industry (DTI) has announced that it would try to resolve the ongoing row between the local administrator of the ".PH" domain and groups protesting the "commercialization" of the domain.

DTI made the decision following a closed-door meeting Tuesday. Representatives from .PH domain administrator DotPH Inc., the newly formed Philippine Domain Administration Convenors (PDAC), the Information Technology and E-commerce Council Legal Cluster group and DTI were present.

DotPH Inc.CEO Joel Disini is currently the administrator of the .PH domain. The late Jon Postel of the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) delegated the country-code top-level domain to Disini in 1989.

The commercialization issue in the .PH domain dispute would fall under the jurisdiction of the agency's Bureau of Trade Regulations and Consumer Protection (BTRCP), according to Assistant Trade Secretary Toby Melissa Monsod in a press briefing.

"The matter is now in the DTI court by mandate of the E-Commerce Law and the Consumer Protection Law," Monsod added.

Monsod said that the trade agency is expecting to tackle the .PH domain issue in two ways. First, it will address the allegations of unfair competition related to pricing of .PH domain through efforts of the DTI information technology team. Second, the agency will consult the global Internet body called the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) or IANA on the use of PH as a domain for phone companies.

"DTI will be sending a letter to ICANN or IANA to inquire if the government has a say in the .PH domain dispute. However, we're not really talking about redelegation here. What we hope to know is what will be the procedure for settling such disputes," Monsod said.

"Definitely, we're not pushing for redelegation," she stressed.

Monsod, however, clarified that the DTI has not yet taken a stand on the redelegation issue.

Redelegation or the reassigning of domain registry administration is an act provided for under ICANN. In effect, redelegation is an impeachment of the current administrator.

A local group representing Philippine Internet service providers and other volunteers from the local online community recently formed the PDAC in hopes of making it the policymaking body for the .PH domain.

DTI will conduct "public consultations" on the matter related to the commercialization of the .PH domain, Monsod said.

Meanwhile, the BTRCP is expected to come up with documents to back allegations related to supposed "unfair competition related to the pricing of .PH domain" in two weeks. Monsod pointed out that most of the issues related to unfair competition are mere hearsay and, so, need to be substantiated.

Monsod also said that the DTI has asked "both sides" to refrain from fanning the flames through media.

Oracle launches Web developer training program

IN ITS ongoing efforts to jump-start Internet application development on Oracle9i, Oracle Corp. has launched iDevelop2001 Online, a new 24x7 online service that offers developers a complete Web-based solution for education and training.

The iDevelop2001 Online service is available to developers free-of-charge through Oracle Technology Network (OTN), where developers will find the software, resources, training and expertise they need to develop any Internet application. Oracle also announced that membership in OTN has reached a record 1.5 million developers, growing at more than 68,000 new members per month.

iDevelop2001 Online offers comprehensive technical courses about the latest Java and XML technologies. These structured training modules cover development and deployment of application services and Internet business process integration, among others.

LBC switches to Gigabit Ethernet

THE SWITCH to Gigabit Ethernet has never been so easy for the LBC group, a leader in cargo handling, remittance and courier services in the Philippines.

The company's continuing expansion into diversified interests led to the unprecedented shift in high-speed networking without the need to infuse huge investments. LBC's decision to implement Gigabit Ethernet technology became as natural as its decision to grow.

Eduardo Cajigal, information technology director for LBC Development Corp. and LBC Bank, views Gigabit Ethernet to best fit its continuing evolution in the corporate marketplace.

"It is the trend in the market, and upgrading our network to Gigabit Ethernet is a necessary move," Cajigal said.

To initiate its move to Gigabit Ethernet, LBC has acquired the 3Com SuperStack 3 Switch 4900 to speed-up access to key network resources and improve efficiency in the delivery of its core services.

"We previously used 3Com hubs only to connect our NT and Novell servers to our desktop clients," Cajigal said. "But now, with the SuperStack (using Gigabit Ethernet), we even have the capability to improve service delivery to our customers."

Cajigal said the Gigabit Ethernet switch enhances its Web-based tracking program that provides the LBC staff the needed tools to monitor the acceptance, deployment, handling and receipt of cargo, remittance payments and packages all over the country.

"The SuperStack speeds up the processing of data and the delivery of data to our staff," he said. "It allowed us to meet our growing bandwidth requirements."

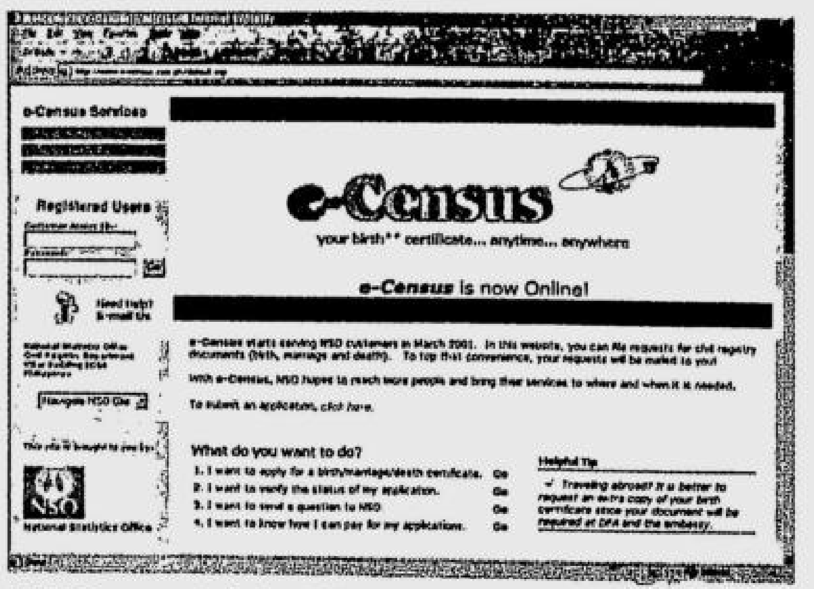
The monitoring service is on a 24x7 operation, Cajigal said, and provides flexibility and reliability for system users wherever they are in the country.

"All our LBC branches around the country would soon have on-time access to this service, providing convenience to our customers," he noted.

The 3Com Gigabit Ethernet SuperStack 3 Switch 4900 supports multimode fiber cabling, designed for companies needing economical switching for the data center, servers, or wiring closet.

The switch offers wire-speed, non-blocking switching across all ports, using a modular architecture supporting all gigabit-based media in the same workgroup platform. It supports a high-performance switching backplane of 32Gbps and capable of delivering up to 24 million packets per second. Other enterprise features include resilient links and an optional power supply to deliver fault-tolerance capabilities.

According to Cajigal, LBC would boost further its tracking services using several consumer platforms, including the Internet, landline and mobile telephones. For short term, LBC would soon introduce WAP and Web-based tracking of packages, remittance payments and cargo wherever the user may be, using its high-speed Gigabit Ethernet network. Arranging for the delivery of packages can also be completed online. The Internet site carrying all these services would soon go live, Cajigal said.



e-Census Services

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e-Census is now Online!

e-Census starts serving NSO customers in March 2001. In this website, you can file requests for civil registry documents (birth, marriage and death). To top this convenience, your requests will be mailed to you!

With e-Census, NSO hopes to reach more people and bring their services to where and when it is needed.

To submit an application, click here.

What do you want to do?

1. I want to apply for a birth/marriage/death certificate. Go
2. I want to verify the status of my application. Go
3. I want to send a question to NSO Go
4. I want to know how I can pay for my application. Go

Helpful Tip

✓ Traveling abroad? It is better to request an extra copy of your birth certificate since your document will be required at DFA and the embassy.

National Statistics Office

WEB Component of the NSO project

Civil registry records now accessible online

(From page G2)

regarding the request, such as name, year and place of birth. After providing the information, the customer then receives a registration number as reference for further inquiries and status follow-ups. Payments for processing and delivery would then be received at Metrobank branches nationwide.

The NSO and Helpline Plus handle the authentication and processing of the documents. Documents to be delivered within Metro Manila are charged P175, while those delivered to the provinces would cost P190. An additional P55 is charged for certificates of marriage.

Courier company LBC delivers the document to the customer after nine working days upon payment at Metrobank. Certificates of marriage, however, take 23 days for delivery due to additional processing. LBC only delivers documents to the authorized applicant. If the applicant is not available to receive the document for three successive delivery attempts, a pick-up notice is issued.

E-Census, the Web component of the CRS-ITP, provides added convenience to Internet users wanting to obtain their civil registry documents. Now live on the Web at http://www.e-Census.com.ph/, e-Census allows online users to request records of birth, marriage, and death online, anytime, from anywhere at their convenience. The requested documents would then be delivered by courier at the applicant's doorstep.

Visiting the site, a user selects "Create New Application" to retrieve an online application form. Requests for birth, marriage and death certificates would then be indicated. Another entry form, which would include the contents of the certificate being applied for, would then be filled up. After clicking 'submit,' an acknowledgement page appears indicating the price of the document being obtained and the request reference/batch request number of the customer. The number is used when paying or inquiring about the status of the application online.

Aside from civil registry document services, e-Census also provides general information, request status query, and, in the future, statistics tabulation.

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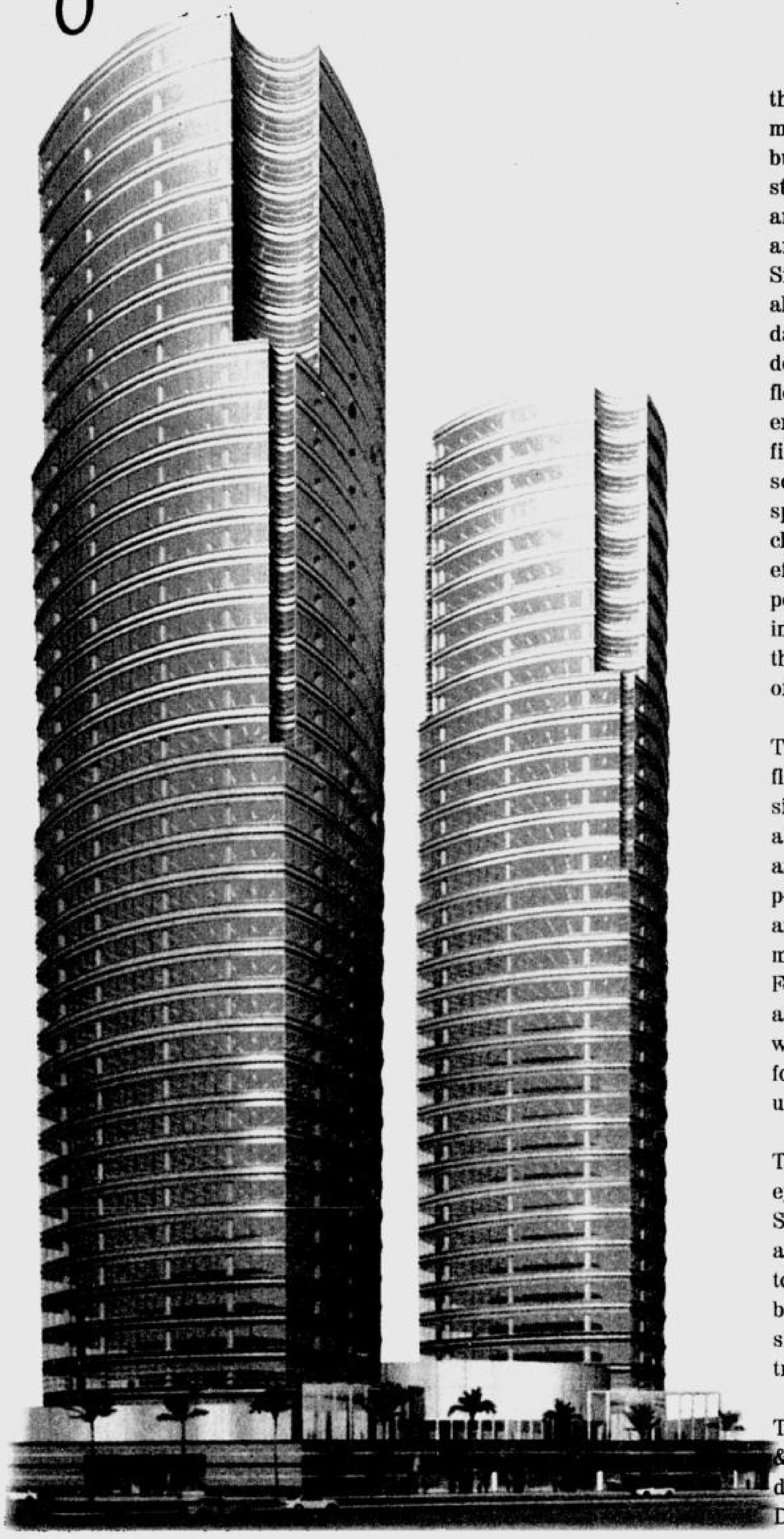


Insular Life is leading the way in shaping the skyline of Alabang, Muntinlupa. The IL Corporate Centre, the company's new headquarters, is currently the major high-rise landmark in Filinvest Corporate City. This imposing structure is composed of twin towers, 33 and 29 storeys high. The towers are triangular in shape, with a concave podium between them which houses a common lobby and a state-of-the-art 524-seat auditorium. Only the finest materials were sourced from all corners of the globe to make sure that the IL Corporate Centre embodies the aesthetic as well as structural demands of a true landmark.

The ultra-modern building provides its occupants with facilities that will generate utmost productivity amidst a wholesome and secure environment. The building features include:

- a full glass curtain walling for energy conservation
- a computerized building management system
- advanced office security system
- high-efficiency lighting
- raised-floor wire management and full standby power
- two sets of escalators
- a computerized lift system consisting of 17 sets of high-speed elevators
- passenger elevator for the handicapped

Other building amenities include:

- an executive club and restaurant
- coffee shop
- 600-slot car park
- helistop

Insular Life's banking subsidiary Insular Savings Bank will also be located on the ground floor. The finest materials, from the floors to the ceilings, walls and fixtures were meticulously chosen not only for their strength and quality but for their aesthetic impact as well. The building's main entrance uses innovative double sliding doors, using Japanese technology. It is designed to keep the warm air outside from getting in and maintains the cool temperature within the building. At the ground floor lobby, granite stones from Brazil were used for the floors and walls giving them a classic elegance and feel. Seraphic glass imported from Singapore was used for the lobby ceiling, allowing for the optimized effect of natural daylight. Half of the ground floor lobby is devoted to water features, consisting of a flowing shallow pond and a fountain. At one end of the elevator lobby, the entire wall is finished in onyx, a semi-precious stone sourced from Turkey. Onyx possesses a special quality which, when backlighted, changes color, creating some sort of magical effect. In the words of its interior designer, people coming to work in the morning could imagine they are seeing a sunrise, while in the afternoon, the same wall gives an illusion of a sunset.

Two escalators bring visitors to the second floor where the auditorium is located (see sidebar on the auditorium). The escalators allow for the best vantage view of the artworks and sculptures located at strategic points at the ground floor lobby. All the rooms and offices have wall-to-wall carpeting, using materials sourced from the United States. For maximum productivity, the workstations are ergonomically designed to maximize working space as well as to give ample room for storage. Painted gypsum boards were used for the office ceilings.

The IL Corporate Centre is a feast for the eyes and an experience for the senses. Structural design, interior design and artworks from Filipino masters all come together in a synergistic blend that gives the building its own unique character – at once sleek and contemporary, yet classic and traditional, warm and inviting.

The building's concept architects were Mohri & Associates of Japan, while its interior designers were the Hong Kong-based INARC Design Asia.

COMPUTERS, CABLE FACILITIES FOR MUNTINLUPA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

In keeping with its philosophy of social involvement in the communities where it belongs, Insular Life, through its corporate giving arm, The Insular Life Foundation, has embarked on two outreach projects for Muntinlupa public schools: PCs for Public Schools and Cable-A-School.

Seeing the importance of science and technology education for our youth, Insular Life Foundation aligned its outreach program for Muntinlupa with the DECS Adopt-a-School Program, which puts together public and private sector efforts toward improving the quality of education in public schools.

A recent study showed that Filipinos ranked among the lowest in math and science among Asian countries because of the lack of quality science and technology education among elementary and high school students in public schools. Majority of public schools in the Philippines is without computer access.

Under the PCs for Public Schools, Insular Life will build a computer laboratory and donate the necessary computers to the Pedro Diaz High School -Buli Annex. With the donation, the school will be able to develop and teach the DECS-prescribed computer curriculum, which will benefit not only the students but the teachers as well. The computer lab will also be used to teach out-of-school youth and unemployed adults within the community. Insular Life will implement the PCPS in coordination with the Philippine Business for Social Progress (PBSP) for monitoring and evaluation of the program.

A second project is the Cable-A-School for the Muntinlupa Itaas Elementary School, located inside the compound of the New Bilibid Prison in Muntinlupa with a population of over 2,000 students. Insular Life signed up with the program's proponent, Sky Foundation, and sponsored the cabling of the school to enable the elementary students, many of whom are children of prisoners and jail guards of the New Bilibid Prison, to view the DECS-prescribed educational programs shown on Knowledge Channel via Sky Cable, thereby facilitating and enhancing their learning experience. Insular Life also donated three TV sets to enable more students to view the programs at the same time.

The project was launched and turnover ceremonies were held last March 26, 2001 at the school premises.

The Insular Life Auditorium

One of Insular Life's enduring legacies is its patronage of theater. It is a well-known fact that the Insular Life auditorium in Makati was home to Repertory Philippines for over two decades.

The new IL Corporate Centre in Alabang will continue this theater tradition. In the Centre is a horseshoe-shaped auditorium with a seating capacity of 524 persons. Equipped with the latest audio, video and lighting facilities, the auditorium will be an elegant venue for the performing arts as well as for corporate assemblies.

Cultural shows featuring drama, dance, musicals, small-scale opera, chamber music and recitals are well suited for the multi-purpose proscenium auditorium equipped with computer-controlled audio and lighting systems, stage rigging with motorized and manual fly gallery, backstage hoist, and dressing rooms.

The auditorium design was custom-fitted to its building location by space planners, EDB designs – the same expert company that built modern theatres for many major corporations and universities in the country.

Artworks in the New IL Corporate Centre

The artworks at the Insular Life Corporate Centre were carefully chosen to portray the company's Filipino roots and give it a distinctly Filipino character. The building's ground floor and auditorium lobbies are now home to several new pieces of sculpture done by three of the country's leading artists. The sculptures blend in very well with the lobby's prominent water feature, creating an interesting structural landscape.

Entering the building lobby from its Corporate Avenue entrance, visitors are greeted by a dramatic water feature of shallow pools and fountains lorded over one on each side by two impressive sculptural pieces. On one side is "Dance of the Dolphins" by renowned glass sculptor Impy Pilapil, a work of art inspired by her wonderful cruising experiences around the Philippines. She recalls the dolphins playing around their boat, creating sparkling ripples and splashes in the vast ocean embracing the Philippine islands.

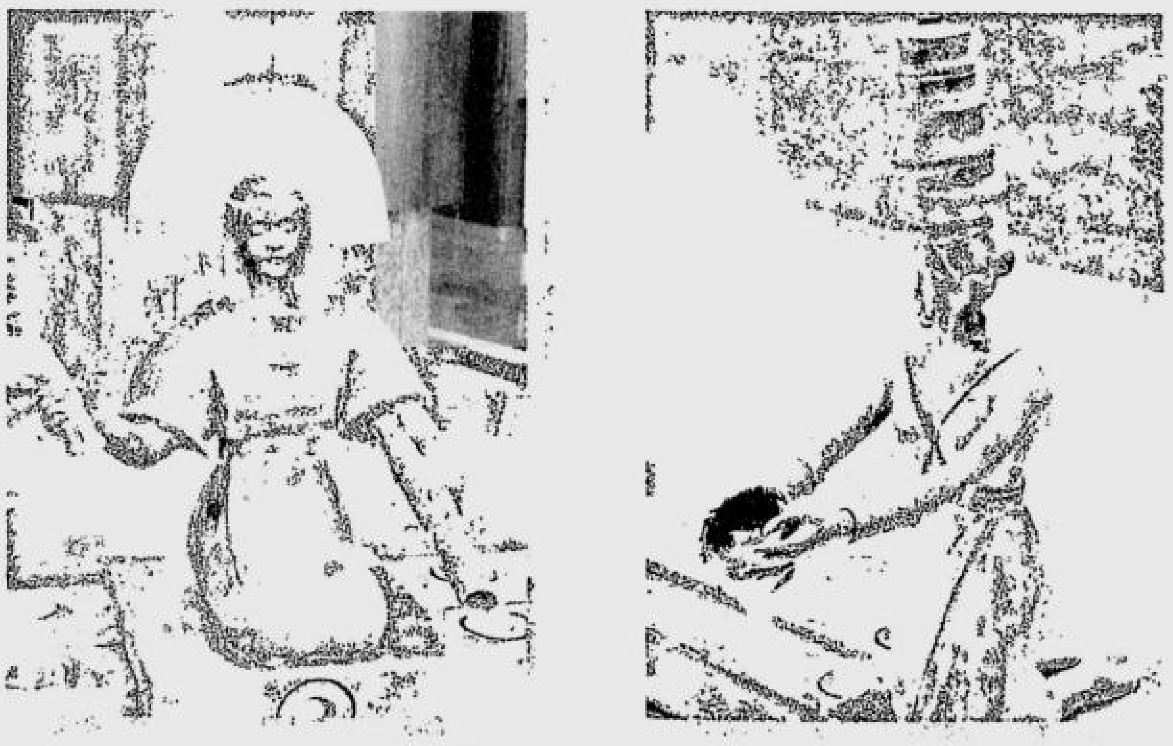
Dance of the Dolphins

Liberation

On the other side is "Liberation," an equally impressive piece of art by José Mendoza. "Liberation" is a sculpture of two birds, wings spread out, flying upwards. The depiction is stylized, using only the outline of the birds' bodies and wings, affording the viewer a practically unobstructed view of the entire composition from any given point. Cast in stainless steel, the birds represent not only the archipelago's fauna but expresses a dynamism that characterizes our land as well. Flight powerfully conveys freedom - the overcoming of barriers and limitations, the ability to reach chosen destinations and heights to which the human mind can soar.

If one enters the building from its other main entrance along Jakarta St., one is met by the three-meter tall, twin marble sculptures of "Malakas and Maganda," again by Impy Pilapil, who gave a contemporary representation of the two famous Filipino folk characters from the poem of Balagtas. Pilapil used black and white marble from Romblon for these two pieces.

Lining along the streams of water running through the lobby are "Higaonon and Itneg Maidens," a creation of Dr. Antonio Raymundo, who says he was inspired to do native maidens to represent the richness of both the northern and southern parts of the Philippines. Four "Itneg" (Cordillera tribe) maidens represent the North while four "Higaonon " maidens represent the South. Raymundo, who is partial to human figures, is better known for terra cotta sculptures, and this is one of his major works in brass. The best vantage view to appreciate the maidens are from the escalators going up to the auditorium lobby on the second floor.



Higaonon and Itneg Maidens

Equally dramatic are the sculptures at the lobby of the Insular Life auditorium on the second floor. Here, overlooking the staircases, are two more imposing pieces by Jose Mendoza, renowned monument artist. "Ode to Joy" and "At Onement," both cast in bronze, depict stylized female human figures engaged in dance, befitting a place that will be a future venue for theater and other arts. "At Onement" captures the movement of an Ifugao dancer, arms outstretched and long robes flowing with her movement. "Ode to Joy" is a more modern expression of dance. The figure's arms are also outstretched, meeting above her head while the fabric of her skirt moves in a fluid motion around her. It is an expression of the sheer joy of life.

Over the centuries, dance has been an integral part of Philippine culture, expressing the people's warmth, merriment and love for celebration. Dance also expresses a more universal theme - the celebration of life.

The new Insular Life Corporate Centre will also house the company's extensive collection of paintings by Filipino masters, notably its Fernando Amorsolo collection. The company has in its possession commissioned works of some of Amorsolo's most famous compositions: the famous painting of the making of the Filipino flag, historical and anecdotal paintings such as the Sale of Panay for a Golden Salakot, and the scenes from rural life that he is so famous for. These paintings will grace the Centre's public areas, executive offices and board room.

Finally, on the massive facade of the building's back entrance is a sight familiar to most Metro Manilans: the bas relief by National Artist Napoleon Abueva of scenes depicting Philippine life and culture. This composition used to adorn the facade of Insular Life's Makati building and made it a landmark in that premier city. The artist Abueva himself lovingly dismantled it from the Makati building and re-installed it in the company's new headquarters where it rightfully belongs - a powerful statement of the company's Filipino identity.

MESSAGES

Congratulations to Insular Life on the inauguration of its new headquarters, the IL Corporate Centre in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, Muntinlupa.

You have once again shown your pioneering spirit by being the first major corporation to locate its headquarters in this rising business district in the southern part of Metro Manila. Our country needs your foresight and stability together with the entire insurance industry in forming a strong foundation for national progress. As one of our country's leading insurance companies, may your bold move inspire more institutions to follow your lead and fuel development in all parts of our country.

May you continue to live up to the new challenges of your industry and succeed in providing life insurance and financial stability to many more Filipino families and individuals. Together let us build an economically progressive Philippines.

Mabuhay!

GMArroyo

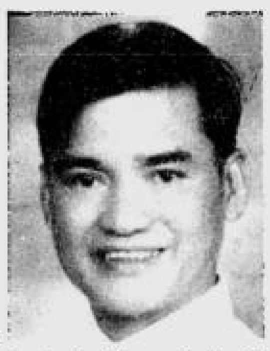
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President of the Republic of the Philippines

Warmest greetings and congratulations to Insular Life on the occasion of the inauguration of its new corporate headquarters in Filinvest Corporate City.

This is another milestone in your company's 90 years of serving the insurance needs of the Filipinos. Your distinguished record is a hallmark in the insurance industry's drive towards building a financially stable and secure citizenry.

To the management, employees and agents of Insular Life, congratulations and may this milestone inspire you to serve your policyholders and customers with renewed vigor and enthusiasm.

EDUARDO T. MALINIS
Insurance Commissioner



In behalf of the People of Muntinlupa City, I welcome the Insular Life Assurance Co. Ltd. to the City with great optimism and congratulations on the inauguration of your new headquarters at the Insular Life Corporate Centre.

Being the largest Filipino life insurance company and for serving the Filipinos for over 90 years, we are honored for having been chosen as the alternative center for commerce in Metro Manila. Indeed, it is a desirable business venture that may be mutually beneficial to all of us.

With you in our midst, we will try to strive even harder to make our services more professional, honest and efficient. The present disposition of our City is ripe for any business enterprise and a conducive place for profitable investment.

Congratulations and we wish you all the success!

JAIME R. FRESNEDI
Mayor, Muntinlupa City

Today, we inaugurate our new quarters, the Insular Life Corporate Centre at the Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang, Muntinlupa. This milestone is a testament to the enduring faith and confidence of our policyholders, the support of government and industry partners, and the dedication of our employee and sales force.

We are proud of this opportunity to be an active participant in the national development effort, even as we remain committed to the original vision of our founders - to have a solid and dependable Filipino company helping its countrymen achieve financial security.

As we begin this new chapter in our history, we are emboldened by the pioneering spirit and idealism of the people who led our company before our time, and we shall continue to pursue their ideals as we endeavor to bring our company to new levels of growth and progress.

VICENTE R. AYLLÓN
Chairman of the Board & President
Insular Life

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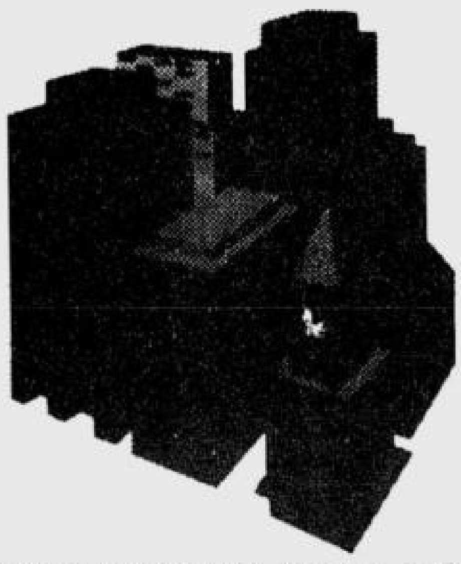

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- TAKENOBU MOHRI, Architect
President of Mohri, Architect & Associates, Inc., Japan

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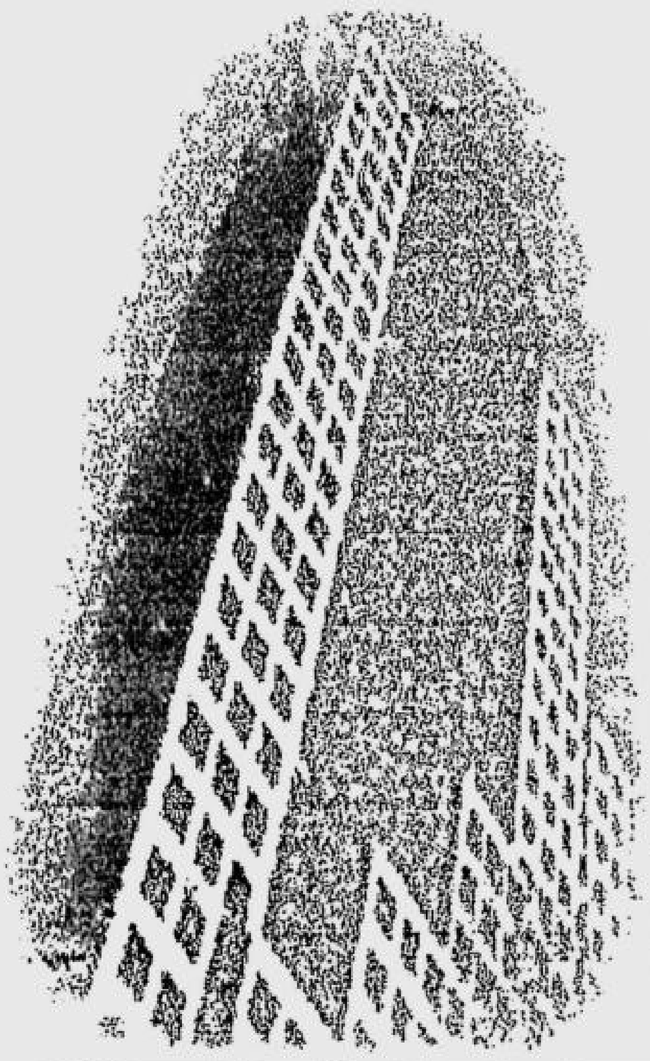

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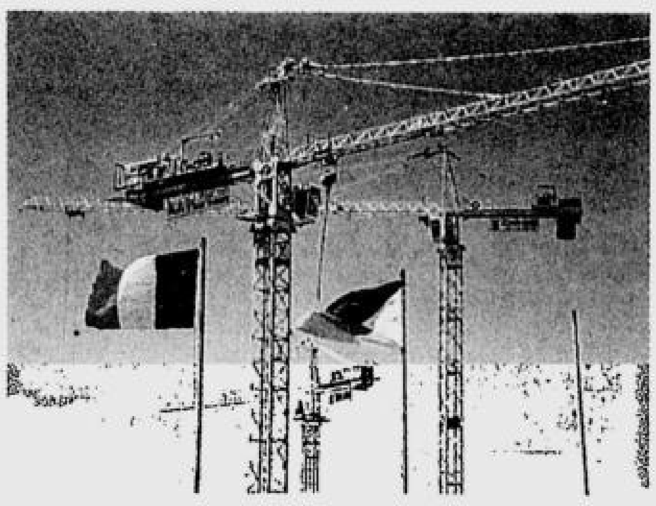

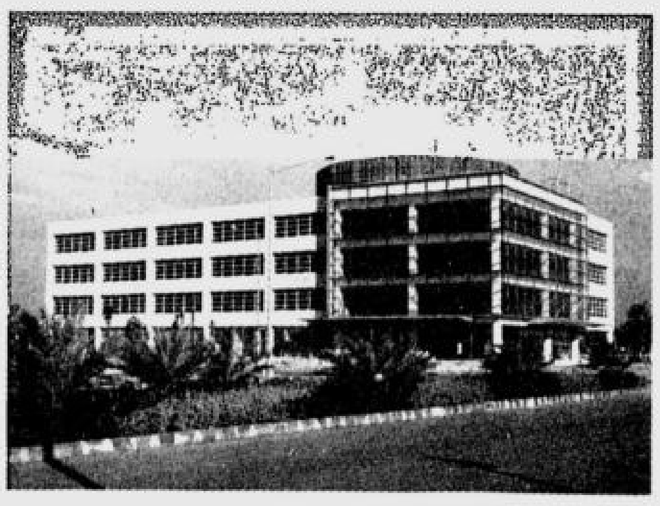

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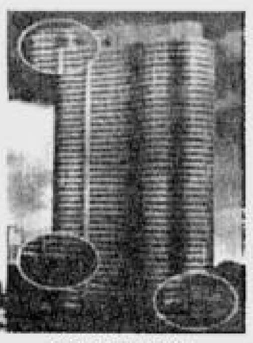
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THIS
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FROM

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